When Mother Lets Us Travel

FRANCE

CONSTANCE JOHNSON

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IN FRANCE

Statue of Joan of Arc — Rheims

WHEN MOTHER LETS US TRAVEL IN FRANCE

BY

CONSTANCE JOHNSON

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TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER

and the Happy Family who traveled with them to the
Lands of Old Romance in '89 and '97
this Book is lovingly dedicated

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WHEN MOTHER LETS US TRAVEL IN FRANCE

CHAPTER I

THE LANDING — HAVRE — CHANGE OF PLAN

The steamer from Southampton was almost within sight of Havre, after a somewhat tempestuous night. The passengers, more or less disheveled, had come on deck and were waiting in the cold morning air for the steamer to reach port. Some had breakfasted, some had felt no inclination to do so. Others had nibbled on sandwiches or sweet chocolate with which they had prudently provided themselves. A boy of twelve sat curled up in a steamer chair, writing to a chum at home.

"*Dear Dick:*

"We're most there. I haven't been seasick at all. But Alice has been awful all night. Poor mother had to sit up with her. I slept like a top. So did father. We've got a French governess, and she's a wonder. But she can't talk much English. She hasn't come up yet. She has 'mal-de mer.' The twins are with her. Father is looking for our baggage.

"It's great to think of going to France. I have been reading a book called 'The White Company'; it's dandy. It starts in England and goes to France, just like us.

"How are all the fellows in school? You ought to hear me trying to talk French. But wait till I've been there a few months!

"Here comes father. Jinks I'm hungry. Good-by.

"JACK."

Jack's father, Mr. Carter, a tall, broad-shouldered man came up to find his family.

"Where are they all, Jack?" he asked.

"I don't know, I haven't seen them since I got up. Are we nearly there?"

"We will be there in a little while. We were delayed by the rough weather. But we ought to collect our things. There's your mother now."

An attractive, pleasant-faced woman, brown-haired and brown-eyed, joined them, followed by a steward carrying bouillon and crackers.

"We have all been having some," she said. "I thought perhaps you would enjoy it."

"Sure, Mother, it is fine."

"We are always ready for something good," was the equally enthusiastic reply of Mr. Carter. "Where are the rest?"

"Mademoiselle is getting them in order; poor Alice has been really sick, and Mademoiselle felt ill herself and had hard work with Bob and Katherine."

"Those kids are always into everything," remarked Jack.

"You would have thought so if you had seen them collide with the steward, who was carrying coffee and crackers to some hungry passengers."

"Here they come at last!" cried Jack, and Mademoiselle appeared upon deck, preceded by a rosy-faced boy and girl, who looked enough alike to be unmistakably twins. Following them came Alice, a brown-haired girl of ten, who was unusually pale as a result of her late unpleasant experience. The twins managed to run into a half a dozen people before they reached their father and mother. Mademoiselle, scolding in broken English, picked them up or put their clothes to rights as the occasion demanded.

"Hurrah! we're almost there! We had a fine time downstairs," chorused the two. They were apt to speak at the same moment.

"Yes, I am glad to say. Robert, do take them for a walk on deck and show them something, and don't let them get dirty again. Mademoiselle has made them look so clean."

"Tell us a story, Daddie," begged Jack, "and I'll come, too. We will have just time for one."

"No use trying, Jack. Bob and Katherine have got to behave and I cannot tell a story and keep all my attention on them. We will be there very soon anyway."

Almost before the twins had time to get dirty again they were in sight of Havre, with its many white

stone docks, its water front cut by frequent inlets, its bays filled with shipping. There were steamers, transatlantic and coastwise, there were gallant sailing crafts and whalers, and the sky was lined with masts.

The passengers all crowded to the side of the boat and Mr. Carter had difficulty in keeping his little party together. The Captain roared his orders through a speaking trumpet, and the beautiful Grand Quai or dock was full of red-capped men, running to and fro to assist in docking the boat.

Mr. Carter armed with Baedeker, explained to the children where the fortifications were; in which direction they could look for the light house and the beach. Over to the right was the great lock where the transatlantic steamers enter.

"What is a lock anyway, Daddie?" asked Jack.

"It is a method of making a boat sail through a canal up hill. The boat enters a lock, a short section of the canal shut off by gates that can be opened. As soon as the boat is safely inside, the high gate by which she enters is closed. This dams the running water, which accordingly rises in the lock and floats the boat up to a higher level, the level of the water above. Then the boat proceeds on her way, perhaps going into another lock to reach a still higher level."

They were to spend that day at Havre and go on to Trouville the next morning. They had very little trouble with the courteous French Custom House officer, and after a short delay left the wharf. Mr. Car-

ter took them over to the hotel, a somewhat subdued family, even the twins being awed.

"Everywhere are mademoiselles," said Katherine.

"They talk too fast; why can't they talk so as I can understand," grieved Bob.

By the time they reached the hotel however, the twins had recovered themselves sufficiently to call out their one carefully prepared joke.

"*Cochon, cochon* (pig)," they called in unison, as their *cocher* (driver) stood collecting his fare. Mademoiselle had to remove them forcibly.

Later Mr. Carter and Jack went out for a walk to see the town. Mr. Carter had been sent over to Europe by his native State of Texas to study municipalities and construction and government of towns. Havre was especially interesting to him on that account, and he was glad that the long August day gave them time to look about. Jack, boy like, was always glad to be with his father, though it was the history of the place rather than its construction that interested him. He liked to moon along and imagine himself back in the olden time. They returned for a late dinner, and Mrs. Carter expressed her disapproval:

"Robert, do remember that the French dine early."

"It won't hurt them for once, Kate, and we have had a great time. This is a wonderful old town. Those fortifications and *quais* are remarkable," and

Mr. Carter launched forth on an enthusiastic description.

"We saw a lot of soldiers, too," Jack broke in at last. "Queer fellows with short baggy trousers and little hats and lots of gold braid. What did you call them, Daddie?"

"Zouaves; there are some regiments dressed like them, who fought in our Civil War. These French regiments are mostly used for service in Africa."

"And, Mother, you ought to have seen all the queer birds and monkeys and things in the shops along the water front, and queer sailors with little red tasseled tammies," added Jack.

"Robert, when do you suppose Miss Ford will come?" began Mrs. Carter, at the first pause of the conversation.

"I fully expect her to-morrow morning. She was to come from Paris this evening and join us in the morning."

"That will be fine," said Alice, who was sitting back in a comfortable chair and appeared to have recovered her usual good spirits. "If only I could stay on with them instead of traveling around. Miss Ford is such fun."

"Another time, honey. This time we can't spare you. Your father is trying to make a construction expert out of Jack, and I must have someone to go to the shops and be frivolous with me."

Mr. Carter said: "Jack and Alice, listen to me; I am going to give you each a twenty-franc piece and I want to see what you will buy with it. That

will be enough for you to have, and you can spend it just as you like. You mustn't ask your mother either. Twenty francs, that is a good deal of money; it must last through your stay in France. How much is it?"

"Five dollars," answered Jack after a moment.

"Right; now remember a franc is about twenty cents, and each franc is made up of one hundred centimes."

"I am going to pretend each franc is a dollar made up of one hundred cents, then I will be awfully careful," said Alice reflectively.

"Don't say awfully all the time, Alice," interrupted Mr. Carter. "I'll tell you what to do. Every time you want to say it, say "*affreusement*" which is very much the same thing in French."

"That would be funny," said Jack. "Thanks awfully for the money."

"It's "*affreusement*" nice of you," cried Alice, and they all laughed and rushed over to kiss their father.

The next morning Miss Ford appeared as they were finishing their *café au lait* or first breakfast, which usually consists of coffee and rolls and sometimes marmalade or honey.

Jack and Alice ran to greet her. She was a little slim person, with grayish-brown hair and jolly blue eyes, an English lady they had met and fallen in love with in London.

"It certainly is good to see you again," said Mr. Carter, shaking her hand.

"I do not know that you will think so when I tell you how I am making changes in your plans."

"You are not going to forsake us, are you?"

"No, indeed, to be sure not. But I am going to run off with your babies to Mers, instead of staying here in dull, expensive Trouville."

"Where is Mers, and what is it like?" cried the twins.

"It is a little village between Dieppe and Calais, near Treport, and it is charming. I have just come from there. I have been staying at a pretty cottage with some French friends from Neuilly and they are so anxious for me to bring the twins and Mademoiselle. Madame Roulet's two little boys are about your age, master Bobbie, but they talk nothing but French."

"O dear," said Katherine.

"It sounds fine," said Mr. Carter.

"If we only had known," said Mrs. Carter, in the same moment, "we could have crossed to Dieppe instead of taking this horrid trip from Southampton."

"There are wonderful chalk cliffs at Mers, like the ones at Dover. And such a beach! and you will be there just in time for the sand carnival which takes place next week. O, I have it all planned and my French friends are expecting us."

"Goody, goody."

"You certainly are a dear," said Mrs. Carter. "It sounds delightful. Only it's too bad that you had to come all the way down here to meet us."

"O, I don't mind. It was no trouble, I assure you.

I thought perhaps you would permit me to escort them back."

"That would be a sensible plan," said Mr. Carter. But Mrs. Carter wanted to see the place where her "babies" were to be left, and so it was decided that they should all go up to Mers and from thence the travelers should proceed to Rouen.

Mr. Carter then left them to repack while he went out to change the tickets.

CHAPTER II

FRENCH TRAINS — MERS — ROUEN AND SOME FRENCH HISTORY

The trip from Havre to Treport and from thence to Mers took almost six hours. They found the French compartment trains very strange and the three classes into which these were divided appealed to Mrs. Carter more than to the others. They were surprised to find that one could not get from one compartment to the other. A long narrow piazza, as Alice called it, was attached to the side of the car, and on this the guard (conductor) passed to and fro on his duties.

The railroad followed the sea for some time and then branched off into the rolling Norman country. The children sat with their eyes fairly glued to the windows. The towns they passed, the little stations they went through, were all so different from places at home.

"The train sounds like a rooster," said Alice, when they stopped at the first station, accompanied by the peculiar, inhuman shriek of the French engine.

"It certainly does," said her father. "But look at all those nice blue-frocked peasants there; and Jack, just see those splendid big Norman horses."

"Where are all the men?" asked Alice, after they

had traveled for some distance. "There are women working in the fields, and women working in the rivers, but I don't see the men."

"Those women are washing their clothes in the streams," said Miss Ford. "So, of course, the men would not be there. But it is quite surprising really not to have seen more men. The French are very odd, you know, but so lovable."

At Dieppe they had to change, and again at Treport, and it was a tired party that finally arrived at Mers in time for a late supper. They drove through the village towards the chalk cliffs standing out white and perpendicular, like a great wall. Then their road turned sharply up the hill, and they stopped in front of a gray house, one of a little group.

Monsieur and Madame Roulet received them with great hospitality, and seemed delighted with the twins. The two French boys, Louis and Léon, were a bit shy, but soon were won over by the joyous good nature of Bob and Katherine. They all had dinner together and discussed the details of the next two months. The Roulets were delighted to have someone to share the expense of the cottage, and especially glad to have Louis and Léon make some American friends.

After dinner Mr. and Mrs. Carter went down to a near-by hotel, taking Jack and Alice, for there was not room for all at the cottage.

They spent the evening in consulting guide books and railway guides. They were to start early the next afternoon, and hoped to spend the morning on

the beach. Mr. Carter wanted to go to the larger cities for his business, but also wished to take in the smaller places of interest on the way.

"We will go to Rouen, Rheims, Paris, Chartres, Mont St. Michel, Orleans, then down to Touraine. The rest can be decided later."

"It really is lovely here," said Mrs. Carter. "I am sure Trouville would not have been so nice. We surely must try to see all we can to-morrow before we go."

"I wish I were going to stay here, too," said Alice.

"You will have a good time, never fear," answered her father.

The next morning Alice rushed to her window to look out at the white beach and blue water. She could see many quaint-looking fishing boats drawn up on the sand in the distance, and a number of bare-legged men were wandering about.

She and Jack could hardly wait to go on the beach. But they were to breakfast at the cottage, so they did not have much time to linger. They were immensely interested in a man who was driving a herd of black goats over the sand.

"Where are they going, Daddy?" asked Alice.

"I think he is probably selling fresh goat's milk. Would you like to taste some?"

"Ugh!" said Jack.

"I would, Daddy," said Alice.

"We haven't time, Robert," said Mrs. Carter.

Mr. Carter thought they had, so he called to

the goat-man and they all went to the beach, where the man milked one of the goats, and filled a cup for the children. It did not prove popular, however, and they quickly proceeded on their way, wishing they had not been so enterprising.

Such good things as they had for breakfast! the creamiest milk, the most delicious hot rolls and fresh butter! It made Alice wish more than ever that she were going to stay.

Mrs. Carter, also, was getting depressed at the idea of leaving the babies, as she called them.

"I think I ought to stay with them," she said to her husband.

"And leave me to travel with Miss Ford and Alice and Jack?" asked that gentleman. "No, indeed, honey. This is our trip and the kids are to stay right here."

"I am afraid they will be very homesick, poor babies."

"Homesick! Just look at them."

They had wandered down to the beach, whither Mademoiselle and the four children had preceded them, under Miss Ford's guidance. At the moment Mr. Carter pointed them out to his wife, shrieks of joy came from their direction. The twins, each mounted on a donkey, were racing together, Alice urging on Bob and Jack urging on Katherine. In the distance Mademoiselle and Miss Ford, surrounded by a little group of people, were waving their hands in despair.

On came the donkeys. Apparently the race was

to end near where Mr. and Mrs. Carter were standing. But it ended before; Bob's donkey suddenly stopped; planted its forefeet in the sand, and Bob himself flew over the long ears and landed in a squealing mass in a little pool of water. Katherine's donkey continued his career, although the two older children ceased their efforts and ran to Bob's assistance. Mr. Carter brought the triumphant winner to a stop.

"What are you children doing?" he asked a little sternly.

"Racing, Dad; Jack said boys could always go faster than girls, but I beat."

Bob had picked himself up and was now running towards them.

"It don't prove anything, Father, does it?" he called breathlessly. "My donkey stopped 'cause Alice didn't play fair — she made him. Girls don't play fair."

"Where are Miss Ford and Mademoiselle?" asked their mother gravely.

"Over there," pointed Katherine. "They can't run as fast as donkeys."

"Did they tell you you could ride on the donkeys?"

"Well, they didn't say not to," said Alice.

"We didn't ask 'em," chorused the twins.

"I suppose you kiddies will pay for your ride, then," observed Mr. Carter as the man who owned the donkies appeared on the scene.

"Oh, Daddy, it's our last day together," said

Alice. "We had such a good time. Maybe if you let Mademoiselle and Miss Ford ride they wouldn't mind." Miss Ford and Mademoiselle signified their desire to remain on foot, but Mr. Carter finally consented to pay the donkey driver. Then they all sat down on the sand, and Mr. Carter, with Jack and Alice to help, and the twins doing their best to hinder, made a wonderful sand city, and he sent the twins to find shells and pebbles and anything that was interesting to put in it.

Mrs. Carter watched them a little sadly as she thought of the long days of separation. She gave new instructions to Mademoiselle and Miss Ford.

When the time for departure came the twins bade a somewhat tearful farewell to the rest of the party. They were consoled, however, by the two French boys, who went to the station with them.

"It will be a fine way for them to learn French," said Mr. Carter, likewise rejoicing over Louis and Léon.

"If only Miss Ford will not spend too much time in the company of their parents," thought Mrs. Carter, giving added instructions to Mademoiselle to watch them carefully.

They rode third class, as the distance was so short and Mr. Carter wanted to know what it was like. The car seemed like a trolley, with its wooden seats, and low partitions. An old peasant woman sat near them, holding a large basket containing live geese, and a couple of somewhat dirty soldiers were talking energetically two seats away. Also

two jolly, fat priests were sleeping and snoring peacefully.

"Altogether," as Jack said, "it's a mighty queer bunch."

They were rather glad on the whole to arrive at Rouen, although it was in a driving rain. Mr. Carter saw them to a hotel, and left them to settle down for the afternoon, while he went out to take a constitutional, as he called it, and see what he could see.

He came back later with a formidable bundle of books under his arm and a regular Niagara Falls running from his hat brim down his mackintosh.

After he had changed his wet clothes, he sat down beside the table and announced that he was ready to enter the first class in French history. The children groaned, but he was firm.

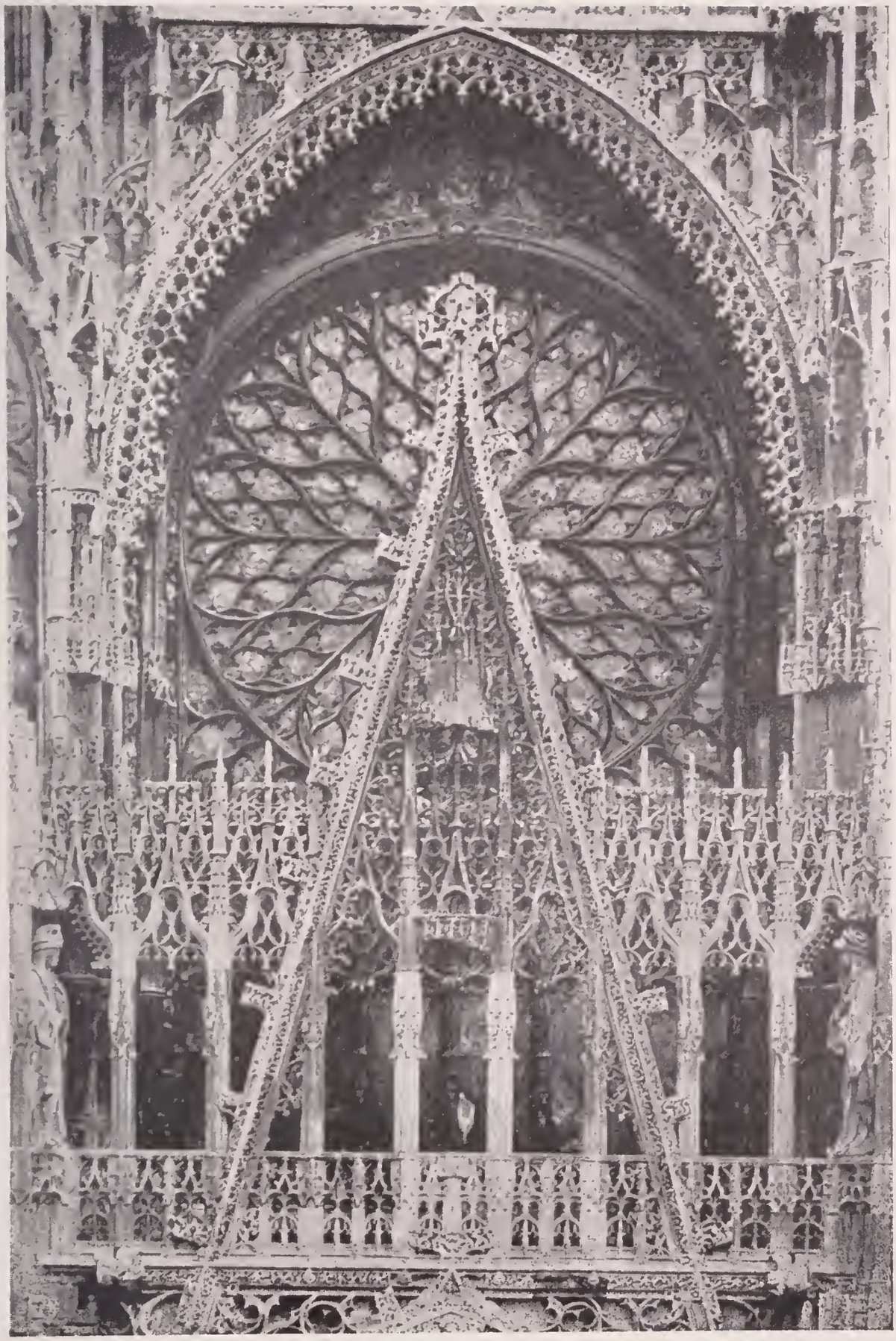
"Jack, you shall be teacher, because you are the oldest, and you may ask any question you want, of anyone present. If you can ask a question which no one can answer, Alice shall be teacher. Now, begin."

"Haven't we read something about Rouen?" Jack asked of Alice. "What do you know about Rouen?"

"Why, wasn't that the place where the little Duke lived? That's a true story, isn't it, Father?"

"I think so. What did he do here?"

"Well, the men all did homage to him, when his father was killed, and I think the king imprisoned him here. And wasn't it where the two little French princes were held as hostages?"



A beautiful stone tracery — Cathedral at Rouen

"No, Alice," said Jack, "not in Rouen."

"Do you know who the little Duke was?" asked Mr. Carter.

"Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy, all he ever feared was doing wrong!" quoted Alice.

"That's all very well as far as it goes. Did you know that he was the great-grandfather of William the Conqueror?"

"Then he was a truly person?"

"Surely. Of course I do not know just how many of Miss Yonge's stories of him are true, but he was a very fine fellow. He took a hand in the building of St. Michel, too. Normandy is just north of Brittany, you know. Rouen is one of the largest of his cities. It was at Falaise, however, that his grandson, William the Conqueror, was born."

"His mother was a beautiful tanner's daughter," interrupted Alice. "I read about her in the Historic Boys, and about him, William, the Boy Conqueror."

"I wish we could have gone to Dives which was the place he sailed for when he started for England in —"

"1066," came the chorus.

"Good for you. It was this same William and his knights who furnished the ancestry for most of the so-called French families in England, the fellows with French names, who claim to have had forefathers who came over in the Conquest. Something like the way our numberless New England cousins have their Mayflower ancestors. But the

Normans were not French, they were Northmen, and much more like the English themselves."

"This is all old history, Daddy, there must be newer history."

"Of course, but we must begin at the beginning. And it's not the very beginning, either, for France has history in Roman times. Normandy and Brittany are mostly full of mediæval history. Though, Kate, I never see the word Brittany without thinking of 'Matelot,' and 'Pêcheur d'Island.' But of course the children are too young to read Loti. But how about Hervé Riel, the simple Bréton sailor?"

"Who was he, Father?"

"You must read Browning's poem about him, one of the finest ballads in the language. He lived at the end of the Seventeenth Century and as the poem has it,— Saved the fleet, honored France, loved his wife, the Belle Aurore. It was after the sea fight off LaHogue between France and England. The French fleet was trying to escape after a defeat, and the French commander feared that his enemy would get possession of what was left of the fleet. He was just going to beach his ships and set them on fire, when the common sailor, Hervé Riel, begged for permission to pilot them through the bay of St. Malo into a channel and safety. It was a forlorn hope, but the French commander, Dammfreville, like a brave man, trusted his sailors and took the chance, and Hervé Riel made good. He found the channel, and from the deck of the largest vessel led the rest to safety. And all the reward

he asked for, according to Browning, was shore leave to go to see his wife."

"Say, he was fine," murmured Jack.

"Is there anything interesting about Havre?" asked Alice.

"Yes, but not particularly so to you. It is very interesting to me, since its construction is remarkably good. But that isn't what you want to know. Who knows anything about Harfleur, right next door to it?"

"Didn't Henry Fifth besiege it?"

"Yes, Kate, and one William Shakespeare put into his mouth a very fine speech, 'Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.' Well, madam, you have helped us out again, and this is the end of the rain and of the history for to-night. It is too late to begin on modern France. Who wants to take a run before dinner?"

Both the children declared themselves delighted, and speedily followed their father and mother out into the wet, dimly lit streets.

CHAPTER III

SEEING ROUEN — ARRIVAL IN PARIS — AN ADVENTURE

The next day Mr. and Mrs. Carter and the two children started bright and early to " do " their first French town.

Their hotel stood close by the old clock tower which Alice had at once admired. " See, there's a cow on the face of it," she cried in delight. She was fascinated by the small shops in the narrow streets. She wanted to go into all of them, in which desire she was encouraged by the proprietors who stood in their doorways with smiles of welcome, but she was restrained by her mother.

Jack liked the big horses, high carts, and the peasants with their blue frocks. Mr. Carter was distressed to find that he could not always understand the French gentlemen of whom he asked directions; nor could they always understand him. But on the whole they got on very well, as they walked through the gray old streets, and safely reached the Place de vieil Marché, where Joan of Arc was burned by the English in 1431.

" You didn't mention her, Daddy, yesterday in our history class," said Jack reproachfully.

" Right, Jack; I usually think of her in connection with Orleans and Rheims. But after all, I

don't know but this is as intimately connected with her as any place. I didn't mention, either, that Arthur of Brittany was murdered here by his old reprobate of an uncle, John, King of England."

Lunch time found them far from the hotel. They were very hungry, but fortunately discovered a delightful little restaurant, with a fat white-aproned proprietor who bade them welcome. This meal, they were told, was a "fork breakfast," in contrast to the more liquid breakfast already consumed.

The children faced the necessity of translating the names of the French dishes on the menu. Mr. Carter refused to allow them to eat until they had discovered for themselves what dishes they preferred. Alice chose boldly, and presently found herself gazing wild-eyed at a plate of fried snails, while Jack, more cautious, ordered *Chocolat, pain* and *beurre.* These words he was sure of.

"The butter has no salt in it, Father," said Jack.

"That is because salt is so heavily taxed here, my boy."

"I wish they taxed it at home," murmured Alice, who had taken some of Jack's bread and butter. The bread came in long rolls, with lots of "scrunchy crust" as Alice said. The waiter seemed a bit worried over their slim meal; he looked with disfavor at the heaped up plates of Mr. and Mrs. Carter.

"Les enfants ne veullent — ils du 'Ros' Beef'?"

"*Oui, du roast beef,*" cried Jack.

"*Et de pommes,*" added Alice, who was remembering phrases. The waiter beamingly departed, and presently every one was satisfied.

"Next morning we tackled our first cathedral," wrote Jack to his chum at home, "and it certainly was great. It was so big and high, with windows way up instead of where they ought to be. They call it the 'clerestory,' because there isn't any real story, I suppose, and you look right up to the roof. You have to pay a franc to see each tomb and each different window. It all smells queer, too, damp, stuffy and perfumey. Daddy says its the odor of sanctity. They don't have pews, just high-backed wooden chairs with places to kneel on in the back, for the fellow behind. They kneel down lots more than we do. Out on the roof the gutter pipes finish off with the heads of devils and things that hang over the edge. The rain water runs out of their mouths. I don't know why they have them on churches; maybe they ward off the bad spirits. A man who seemed to want to be paid all the time showed us round." So Jack wrote of the delightful old sacristan, a sort of cathedral janitor, who led them about all the morning. Mr. Carter explained to Jack and Alice how those early builders invented the flying buttress, the half arch attached to the strong buttress on the outside, which enabled them to do away with part of the side walls and insert great stained glass windows. These by degrees were made larger and larger, until a beautiful stone

tracery had to be built, in which the glass was inserted.

"The Gothic arch is different from the early Roman arch; it is long and pointed. People say that it came at the time of the spiritual uplift and typified the aspirations of the people," said Mr. Carter. "You can see for yourselves the tall arches and spires."

The children were delighted with the long narrow stone stairs into the gallery, built in the thickness of the wall. From here they could look down into the body of the church, where a peasant wedding was taking place in one of the chapels. It was all so old and mysterious; they felt a bit silent and awestruck, but gradually this wore away, after visiting enumerable chapels and tombs, each of which seemed to cost a franc to see. So when they finally were shown the embalmed heart of Richard Cœur de Lion, Jack burst out, "Dad, if I see another dead 'un, I will die, too." And they proceeded out into the sunlight.

They stayed three more days in Rouen. Mr. Carter went about his business of studying construction and plan, while the rest of the family drove around in *voitures,* the two-seated carriage with its one drooping horse, and cheerfully shabby *cocher,* clad in a frock coat and shiny stovepipe hat, which one meets with all through France. They took tram rides, also, into the neighboring villages, and climbed Saint Catherine's hill, with its beautiful view of the city, and the Seine flowing

peacefully toward the sea and away from turbulent Paris. As they stood on the hill, Jack called his mother's attention to a distant speck in the sky.

"Is it an enormous bird, or what is it, Mother?" he asked.

Nearer it came and larger it grew until the boy cried, "It's an aeroplane! Oh, Mother, to think of coming to France to see one. Isn't it a wonder?"

Over the old city flew the monster bird, man's creation, imperfect and wonderful. They could hear the distant whirring of the screws and the wings. It swooped down in graceful curves, and finally disappeared in the distance.

"If I could only ride in one," murmured Jack.

"I'd be scared," cried Alice.

"I think I would be afraid, too," remarked Mrs. Carter.

"This isn't like being abroad, is it? We might be at home where we live," said Alice as they walked down the hill.

"People live here," said Mrs. Carter, with a laugh. "They aren't all dead-uns as Jack says. Your father has letters of introduction to some charming people and I know it will be pleasant to see how one can readily live comfortably in old chateaux and castles."

"You seldom if ever see sights like that at home," added Jack, as they saw some merry young women pounding their wash in the river; feet bare and skirts tucked up. The splendid, big horses and high

carts were strange, too, and the friendly little peasants who drove them.

That night Mr. Carter declared his business in Rouen was over, and announced that the next afternoon they would start for Paris. In the morning he wanted to take a last look at the "dead-uns" because, as he said, he had been interviewing men who were very much alive.

"And by the way, Kate, Monsieur Raoul, an engineer I have been talking to, has given me a letter to some people in Touraine; to a Monsieur Joliffe, who, he says, is a delightful old aristocrat in Tours. I think those letters to de Tonville in Paris are worth presenting. He's the man, Jack, who does those very nice horse and dog pictures."

"Then we have that letter to somebody in one of the chateaux near Tours, Robert," said Mrs. Carter. "I want the children to see some real French life."

"They will; Monsieur de Tonville has children, I understand. Well, to-morrow night we will be in wonderful old Paris. It doesn't seem possible."

It was late in the afternoon when the train pulled into the station of St. Lazare, in Paris. The Carter family stretched and seized their parcels and bags, which they passed over to the eager hands of waiting porters. A *voiture* was found, Mrs. Carter and the children got in, and Mr. Carter went off to identify his trunks and provide for their transportation to the Hotel des Saints Pères. The question of hotels had been a puzzling one, but Mr. Carter finally de-

cided on one recommended to him by some architect friends. It was situated in a central position, near the galleries of the Louvre, and was moderate as to price.

They had a long drive mostly down wide, clean-looking boulevards, passed the Church of the Madeleine and through the Place de la Concorde, where, as Mr. Carter explained, the guillotine had stood on the day when Louis the XVI was executed. They drove down the banks of the Seine with its many bridges, and so to the Rue des Saints Pères, past the school of the Beaux Arts, to the hotel.

Here porters seemed to spring out of the ground, and their baggage was borne before them as they entered as if in triumph. During the discussion as to rooms and prices, Mrs. Carter and the children went back into the little garden court that divides the dining-room from the front of the house.

After dinner Mr. Carter proposed a promenade *en voiture.*

"Not to-night, Robert; Jack and Alice are tired, and I don't want to go without them the first night here."

"Nonsense, Mother, we're not babies; Jack and I will have a fine time here. Please go," said Alice.

"That's the way to talk, kiddies. Come, dear, go with me to-night, and some other night we will take the children."

So with some misgivings, Mrs. Carter put on her hat and went downstairs with her husband, while

Jack and Alice settled down in their rooms to talk and read. Jack had "A Tale of Two Cities" by Dickens, while Alice was less interested in "Baedeker's Paris." Finally she threw it down on the table, and getting up walked over to the window. The little parlor in which they were sitting looked down on the court, dimly lighted, and people were going to and fro the dining-room. Alice watched them for a while and then a bright light from a room on one of the upper floors opposite caught her eye. A moment before that the room had been dark. In another moment the light was dimmed, but she could see plainly through the thin window curtains that two men seemed to be struggling together.

"Come, quick, Jack, they're fighting," she called.

Jack, whose mind was full of the bloody scenes of the Revolution, laid down his book and flew to the window. He half expected to see an aristocrat hanging from a lamp post amid the shouts of the populace.

Alice pointed across the court.

Jack, too, saw in the dim light the vague figures of two men, apparently in a struggle. The windows were open, but the children could hear no sound from the men. The noises from downstairs were too loud.

Suddenly one of the men seemed to snatch something from the other, and throw it on the floor. The other man threw himself more fiercely into the fight.

"Ought we to do something, Jack?" whispered Alice.

At that moment a sudden breeze blew in the children's faces and Jack saw a paper flutter down into the court from the room opposite.

Jack, seized by an impulse, rushed down the stairs. His curiosity was aroused. He resolved to find the paper.

He ran so fast that he got into the court just two minutes ahead of the two men who had been fighting. The paper had blown across the court almost to his feet and he picked it up. He opened it and saw that it was covered with mechanical drawings and figures. It was evidently the work of some engineer. Then the two men hurried up. Their clothes were all rumpled and they showed signs of the struggle.

"*C'est à moi*" (It is mine), they both said as in chorus.

Jack held the paper in his hand and looked at the men before him. He was frightened. One of them was a large, round-faced, fair-haired man,— the other looked dark and fierce, with black mustachios.

"I will give you five francs for it," said the fair-haired man in French. He spoke slowly and Jack understood.

"Is it yours?" asked the boy in English.

"Mine — *Oui,* mine"— The man put his hand in his pocket as though to take out his money, but instead, he struck the other man a heavy blow, tore the paper from Jack's hand and dashed away.

For a moment the boy was stupefied. Then he started to find help. Some people were just coming from the dining-room.

But the dark man evidently was not hurt. He had only been stunned for a moment by the force of the blow. He laid a detaining hand on the boy's shoulder.

"*Non, non,*" he gasped.

Jack understood him.

So for a moment they stood. Then the man pulled himself together. He fastened his coat, turned up his collar and walked slowly to the door of the office from which he could reach the street. Jack walked with him. He didn't know what to do.

The *concierge* at the door looked at them curiously, but said nothing.

Once outside, the man hailed a passing cab, pressed one finger to his lips to indicate silence, and departed.

Jack watched him drive away, and then trembling with excitement rushed back to tell Alice all about it.

They agreed not to say anything unless they were questioned, but when a few moments after their father and mother returned Jack could not resist.

His mother was very much disturbed and thought he should give an alarm. So Mr. Carter went down and spoke to the clerk.

A man was sent up to the room on the second floor, but of course no one was there.

The clerk finally begged him not to say anything. No one had been killed and apparently no one was

the loser but the hotel, for some guest must have left without paying his board. But the next morning the mystery deepened for none of the guests had left and everything was as it should be. Mr. Carter was inclined to think that the children had fallen asleep and dreamed it all.

"But the *concierge* saw the man, Father," persisted Jack.

The *concierge,* however, denied it. He had seen nothing. And the matter was closed. But Jack and Alice often talked it over together. It was what they had expected to find in Paris — mystery and adventure. Was this to be the end? Jack hoped not. And as they drove on top of omnibuses through the crowded streets he was always on the lookout for one of the men. In every church or building he watched for them. Finally he came to think himself he had been dreaming. Nevertheless, the faces of the two men, seen in the dim light of the court, remained fixed on his mind.

In the meanwhile they became acquainted with some of the other guests at the hotel. Many of them were connected with the Beaux Arts, a school of art on the same street. They were busy, pleasant folk, informal and friendly. Mr. Carter became especially interested in an architect from Germany, who seemed to have been quite a traveler. The two men went off on expeditions on which Mr. Carter learned much about his especial line of work. Herr Berkmann sometimes came to their rooms, and one evening invited Mr. and Mrs. Carter to

visit his apartment. The children, who had made friends with the one other American family there, a Mr. and Mrs. Redmond, with their children, Tom and Polly, decided to have a party in their own room. So the four young folks spent the evening together. Just before they parted for the night Jack happened to be looking out of the window when he noticed that the room opposite was well lighted and saw his father and mother there talking to Herr Berkmann. So he was the man whose room had been the scene of the quarrel!

Jack immediately became interested and decided to be more friendly with the German gentleman. Maybe he could explain the matter. Jack would wait and see.

CHAPTER IV

RHEIMS AND THE AVIATION MEET — MONSIEUR JEAN

One morning as they lingered over their bread and orange marmalade, Pierre, most attentive of head waiters, came up and in rapid French informed Mr. Carter that there were to be some special military aviation tests at Rheims that day — did not Monsieur want to go? Monsieur thought he did.

"Who wants to go to Rheims to-day to see the flying?" he asked.

"I thought we were going to have *goûter* with the de Tonvilles this afternoon," said Mrs. Carter.

"I wasn't going was I, dear? That's only for the ladies. Suppose Jack and I go to Rheims and you and Alice go to the Tonvilles. Weren't they going driving, or something?"

"Yes — they were going to show us modern Paris."

"Shops and lingerie? No, no, dear. You and Alice go. We'll go to Rheims. Pierre, *à quelle heure peut on partir pour Rheims?* (What time can one start for Rheims?)"

Pierre answered by disappearing and presently brought back a pocket guide. Between them they found a train that would reach Rheims at 12:30 o'clock.

"That's fine, Jack. We can take some lunch on the train and have a short time for the city and then to the field. I believe they fly at 3:30. If we can't get back, we'll spend the night there, Kate. Pierre," he asked in French, "how long does it take to get to the *gare de l'Est?*"

"Not long, Monsieur. You will have a few minutes in which to make your preparations. The *voiture* will be waiting and you catch your train with ease."

"Good for you, Pierre. Come, everybody — we must take a bag in case we spend the night."

"Oh, Daddy, it's perfectly bully," cried Jack, and he and his father hurried up the stairs to their rooms.

Alice and Mrs. Carter started slowly after them.

"Would you like to go, Alice?" asked her mother.

"I think I'd rather have the drive and *goûter* with the de Tonvilles."

"I don't know but I would, too. Anyway, I must go, for we have promised."

"You will let us know if you decide to spend the night, Robert?" asked Mrs. Carter as her husband kissed her good-by.

"Surely, dear — but we are pretty sure to. Rheims is a most interesting city. How would you like to join us there to-morrow?"

"I am anxious to see a little more of Paris. I think Alice and I will stay here. Now do hurry, or you'll miss the train. Good-by — good-by."

Mr. Carter and Jack hurried downstairs, armed with camera and field glass and a small valise.

The *voiture* was waiting and Pierre helped them in.

"*Gare de l'Est,*" he told the driver and they were off.

They had a long drive before them and Mr. Carter took out his pocket map as they crossed the bridge and drove past the Louvre, and pointed out to Jack some of the places of interest — the Theatre de la Gaité, the Port St. Denis, the prison St. Lazare, famous in the French Revolution, and then the station.

"Shall it be second or third, Jack, my boy? It's a short ride; let's go third — or no — I believe we'll be stylish to-day. We might meet someone who was going to the field and could help us."

Accordingly they rode first.

"Now, Jack, here's the Baedeker; you read to me about Rheims."

It was not yet time for the train to go, and they sat down on opposite sides of the compartment so as to cover two windows.

"Rheims, one of the most historically interesting cities in France, seat of an archbishopric —" began Jack.

"You surely remember the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims," interrupted Mr. Carter.

"Why, but that is pronounced differently — it rhymes with dreams — is it the same place?"

"Surely — and 'The Jackdaw sat on the Cardi-

nal's chair,' and stole the cardinal's ring in the Episcopal palace here at Rheims."

"Isn't that funny!"

"Now go on and tell me some more."

At that moment the door of the compartment was opened and two gray-haired, military-looking gentlemen entered. They sat down together and talked rapidly in French, and Mr. Carter's mind wandered from the glories of Rheims while he involuntarily listened. They were evidently bound for the aviation meet, too, for their talk was all of aeroplanes and monoplanes and Antoinettes and Bleriots. They seemed to be quarreling violently and Jack abruptly ceased reading, but his father reassured him. Every other minute one of them would go to the window and look out. At last, just as the train was ready to start, a third gentleman rushed up, evidently expected by the other two. What was Mr. Carter's delight when he recognized his friend Monsieur de Tonville, the artist.

"Ah, Monsieur," he said in French, "you did not remain at home to welcome your American friends?"

"No, Monsieur," answered Monsieur de Tonville. "I left my wife to entertain the ladies and myself went forth to guide the gentlemen of the family on the field. For I presume you are going there."

"We are, Monsieur. Jack, you have met Monsieur de Tonville?"

"*Assurement* (Surely). *Bonjour,* Monsieur

Jacques. And now, Monsieur Carter, may I present my friend, Monsieur le Colonel Noir and Monsieur le Generale Blanche."

The three gentlemen bowed and exchanged the proper civilities. Jack was also presented and very shyly bowed.

"Monsieur Noir has come all the way from Provence; he is one of those most interested in to-day's doings — for his son is a contestant," said de Tonville.

"And you are the special artist at the front," laughed Mr. Carter.

"Exactly. Monsieur Blanche is an enthusiast and goes to every aviation meet. He is an expert."

"O, no, Monsieur, you do me too much honor. It is Monsieur Noir who knows, for his son Jean is to make one of the most hazardous trials to-day — that of ascending in his Antoinette with two passengers — a difficult feat, for the Antoinette is better adapted for long and rapid flight. Monsieur Jean is a pupil of Monsieur Latham."

Jack sat by his window listening, but understanding little of the talk. Even his father sometimes found himself at a loss as the three eager Frenchmen discussed the affair.

Presently they reached Rheims.

Monsieur de Tonville advised the Carters to go to the Cathedral. "But do not be late at the field," he added. "Be there by three and present this card at the entrance to the field — at the north entrance. The gate-keeper will show you where we are and

He was not flying just to amuse spectators

you can meet some of our French officers. Afterwards you must have *goûter* with us at the club. You will?"

"Indeed, yes," answered Mr. Carter, and then they parted. The three Frenchmen went off in a waiting automobile and Mr. Carter and Jack took one of the inevitable *voitures* and bade the man drive to the Cathedral.

Jack was deeply impressed by the beautiful old church, and his father called his attention to some of the ways in which it differed from the Cathedral at Rouen.

"You remember how high that seemed? Four stories of columns and clerestory — but this is really higher. You remember the stained glass, and the double aisles of columns? This interior is much simpler, but here you see the wealth of carving. Do you notice that the glass in the lower windows here gives more light and is less rich than above? It is modern! The old glass was finer and darker. In Rouen the three towers were odd, and of different size — that you will see at Chartres, which I understand is the purest of French Gothic. We haven't really time to study this one — only remember that almost all the kings of France were crowned here. And that it was here that Jeanne d'Arc brought her kings to be crowned."

"Why don't we have cathedrals in America, Daddy?" asked the boy.

"We do — only they are not like these. These took centuries to build and, furthermore, were made

by men who put their heart into it. Every meanest workman loved his job. They are hand-made, Jack, not machine-made, if you know what I mean.

"People don't take the time and they lack the love to make glass like that for churches nowadays in America. Nor do they spend a lifetime carving one statue for the top of a cathedral tower. You have seen some beautiful church windows at home, but they are like fine paintings — not like stained glass."

They sat down on the stiff wooden chairs, silent. The incense was burning before the high altar and seven candles shed a soft light. Through the glorious windows the sunbeams came and colored the gray old stones with many-colored brilliance. A few peasants were kneeling at one of the little side chapels, telling their beads.

Jack felt as if he were far, far away from Texas and the church that he had known from Sunday to Sunday. It was so strange, so old — so religious. Somewhere in the boy's mind came the words of the hymn, "Ancient of days." There was something in that great building that had been there from the beginning and would be there forever, so it seemed to him.

Finally Mr. Carter got up with a sigh. "It's time to go, Jack," he whispered, laying a hand on the boy's shoulder. The two walked out silently, hat in hand.

"I wonder what is going on in the boy's mind," thought Mr. Carter, but he said nothing even after

the doors had closed behind them and they were walking through the brilliant sunlit square — for in France every cathedral has its *place* or square, and often a little park.

They found a *voiture* and drove out toward the aviation field amid a crowd of others going in the same direction — autos, carriages, horsemen — all bound on the same quest. Jack with a sigh came back from the past to the contemplation of the most modern and most wonderful of achievements.

At the north gate they presented Monsieur de Tonville's card, introducing them as guests of Monsieur Jean Noir, and the soldier on guard instantly admitted them and pointed out to them the direction in which they were to go. The stands were crowded and hundreds of automobiles were lined up in places of advantage. It was a still afternoon, no breath of air stirred the clouds, lazily lying along the horizon. A dozen or more odd-looking buildings at the side of the field, "called hangars, I believe, Jack," were the stables, the houses of the monster birds. Half a dozen machines were already being put in readiness for the afternoon performance.

At the rooms of the French Aero Club Mr. Carter and Jack met their friends of the morning, and in addition many uniformed gentlemen, charming and cordial. Monsieur Jean Noir, the famous young aviator, was there, and Jack's pride knew no bounds when that gentleman spoke to him in broken English. "Is it that you would like to go up in the heaven?" he asked.

"Indeed, I would," declared Jack bravely.

"You would dare? It is to be afraid."

"I am not afraid. I'd — I'd give anything to —" he stopped suddenly. He was aware that the hum of conversation had stopped. They were listening to him and Monsieur Jean. Monsieur Jean took out his watch. It lacked fifteen minutes to the hour when the meet was to begin.

"Will you go up a little with me now at once, little brave one?"

Jack turned mutely and appealingly to his father.

There was a moment's silence as the two looked into each other's eyes.

Then, "Run along, my boy," said Mr. Carter.

Jack said, "Oh, Daddy," and then hurried out with Monsieur Jean amidst the cheers of the men. They crossed the corner of the field almost at a run. Monsieur Jean's great Antoinette was poised in front of the shed as if ready to fly.

"*Vite, vite, un manteau,*" called Monsieur Jean. A soldier brought a heavy leather coat, which fairly fitted the well-grown boy. Monsieur Jean told him where to sit — the straps were adjusted, and the attendant began cranking the machine.

"Hold tight, Jacques."

"*Affreusement* tight," answered Jack. Monsieur Jean laughed.

"You are *un sport,*" he said.

And Jack held on tight, as the great throbbing machine slowly started. Clumsily it went over the ground until, gathering speed, it began to rise. The

wind roared in Jack's ears. So far, it was much like riding in a fast automobile. But then the great bird-like creature rose and rose, skimming over the field and Jack, daring to look down saw a distant multitude of upturned faces. He only looked once, for his heart gave such a thump at the sight that he shut his eyes for a minute. When he opened them again they were going so fast that he had but one thought — to hold tight. He was clutching with both hands and it was cold in the August sunlight. The wind whistled in his ears and his heart was pounding — yet somehow it was all glorious — immense.

He didn't know where they were going. He hardly dared to look at the great wings of the monster, and the throb of the screw seemed to be in his head somehow. He felt as helpless as if floating on a cork in a great ocean. And then it wasn't so cold, and the wind didn't blow so hard and the screw grew quieter and a delicious sense of falling asleep in a swing came to the boy. The next moment a wild burst of cheers brought him to his senses. The machine alighted gently as a bird, and Monsieur Jean jumped from his seat and helped him to get down.

"Bravo, *mon gars* (youngster)," he said. "You will go again, *hein?*"

Jack blinked a little. He was stiff, and it took him a moment to find himself.

But then with flushed cheeks he thanked Monsieur Jean.

"It was the bulliest time I ever had," he gasped.

At that moment Mr. Carter and some others rushed up and wanted to know in French and English how he had felt. Had he been frightened? Was it like an automobile; what was it like?

"I think," said Jack slowly, "it was something like shooting the shoots at Coney Island and something like winter on the prairies, when the snow has just fallen and you're all alone."

"Will you invite me one day, Monsieur Jack? I will come to your snow prairie."

"Invite you — Oh! Monsieur Jean, if you would only come."

"One day I will go across the sea — in my Antoinette."

"Don't wait for that, Monsieur Jean," laughed Mr. Carter.

"It is to come, Monsieur," replied the young fellow, seriously. Then he shook hands with Jack. "One day we shall go together somewhere, *n'est ce pas?*"

And Jack as gravely replied, "Come and get me."

Then the field was cleared and Jack and his father retired with the others to the seats especially prepared for the Aero Club. One after the other, the great bird machines rose in the air — four biplanes and two monoplanes. Jack followed Monsieur Jean and his Antoinette as it rose in the air with two passengers, slowly circling like a great bird.

"The biplanes are steadier, I think," said Mr.

Carter, but Jack was heart and soul for the Antoinette — *his* machine, and his friend.

Upward they went, till the machines grew smaller and smaller, and at last were no longer visible, while the crowd watched breathlessly. Then there were other events — a couple of biplanes circled the field, but Jack sat with his eyes fixed, looking up. At last a speck, then another came in sight — two of the biplanes were coming slowly down — Jack sighed. Monsieur Jean was still up there — way, way up. Then presently a monoplane appeared — and another biplane. But still Monsieur Jean did not come. The men who alighted were half sick with fatigue and cold. Then at last a biplane appeared, and the crowd went wild with enthusiasm. There was only one machine left up in the sky, that of Monsieur Jean. They watched in silence now for the last of the contestants, the great Antoinette.

"Can anything have happened, Daddy?" whispered Jack.

"He would be down if it had, my boy," was the reply.

All of a sudden, "I see him," came a shrill cry. Jack with his father's glasses had discovered the black speck in the sky, descending slowly, carefully. Monsieur Jean knew his affair. He was not flying just to amuse spectators, but to show what a well-run machine could do. He had in his mind always the safety of his passengers. And now came a wild burst of applause as the machine landed. The three

men fell down from weakness, but were assisted to the sheds. There were several other competitions, but for Jack the event of the day was over. He was glad when the little party left their seats and returned to the clubroom, where presently Monsieur Jean and his two passengers joined them.

There was not much chance to speak to the hero, but Jack watched the older men surround him. After all he had had his triumph.

Finally the great afternoon came to an end. Mr. Carter and Jack made their adieux and were invited to partake again of the club hospitality. Monsieur Jean called out *au revoir* to Jack, and Mr. Carter informed them all that he would make them welcome in Texas. "And if you cannot come so far, come to see us at the Hotel des Saints Pères in Paris."

It was so late that Mr. Carter decided not to return to Paris — also, Jack was tired out. He hardly spoke a word during supper and mooned around afterward while Mr. Carter read guide books, after telegraphing to Mrs. Carter: "Aviation fine — Jack flew — glad we came — return Paris to-morrow. Robert C."

CHAPTER V

THE DE TONVILLES — SEEING PARIS WITH MONSIEUR JEAN

In the meanwhile Alice and her mother had gone to the de Tonvilles. They lived in a delightful apartment right over which was Monsieur de Tonville's studio. Mrs. Carter was greatly pleased with the massive, carved-wood door of the house. They were admitted by the *concierge,* a person of great importance who lives on the ground floor. Then they ascended *"au Premier"* two flights up, where they found Madame with her two children, Roger and Louise, awaiting them in the salon. They were all to go out together in an automobile to see the sights of Paris.

They drove down the noble avenue of the Champs Élysées, with its trees and little parks on either side, its beautiful statues and crowds of people, to the Place de l'Étoile, place of the star, the points of which lead off into stately avenues. In the center stands the Arc de Triumph, facing the Champs Élysées and with its back to the avenue of the *Grande Armée;* white and splendid and adorned with triumphal statues.

They drove through the parkway of the Bois de Boulogne, celebrated as the favorite drive of the aristocracy and *beau monde* of Paris. Here were

crowds of automobiles, of carriages, all hurrying, all gay; and now and then some tourist in a hired *fiacre* would break the line and disturb the sparkling monotony of fashionable vehicles.

Then, swiftly passing through the gates they went out to Versailles, palace and park of the later kings of France. It was very beautiful and magnificent. Madame de Tonville and Mrs. Carter gazed enthusiastically at the great shining halls and on the charming woods and gardens, living over again the scenes of the Revolution. They seemed to see the beautiful Queen Marie Antoinette, first living gayly in the splendor of her early days, later holding at bay the fierce mob from Paris.

Alice, Roger and Louise were trying to make each other understand. They were laughing merrily at their own mistakes. They seemed to have known each other for years. Roger was a student at an English school near Paris, while Louise was preparing to enter a fashionable *pension* the following year. They admitted that they were somewhat behind in their studies and so had returned to Paris earlier than usual.

"Of course no one is in Paris at this time of the year; it is too hot," they said. Roger was hoping that in a few years he would be able to go to the military school of St. Cyr.

Louise listened in amazement to some of Alice's stories of school fun at home. She had studied with a governess and the school she was to enter was one of the most exclusive.

"But it is not as it used to be," she said. "Before it was like a nunnery. Now we have games and gymnastics — and there is to be a monsieur to teach our singing, dancing and music. Before it was always madame. But madame will of course sit in the room!"

"How funny — why?" asked Alice.

"It is more *convenable*" (suitable), replied Roger gravely.

"Come, children — we must return," called Madame de Tonville.

So they climbed into the carriage and were carried swiftly back to Paris.

It was almost too late for *goûter*, so Madame de Tonville persuaded her guests to remain to supper.

"Our gentlemen will be very late, I am sure. You need not expect Mr. Carter for supper."

"Indeed, they will spend the night in Rheims, I think," answered Mrs. Carter.

The salon and dining-room were decorated with gilt mirrors and two beautiful candelabra stood on the dinner table.

They went up in Monsieur de Tonville's studio and examined his pictures and sketches of animals. Alice was delighted with them. Then Louise took her into her own bedroom and showed her the pretty furniture and chintz and dimity curtains and hangings.

Presently they sat down to a delicious dinner, lacking, however, the inevitable American dessert;

which was served by a neat, fine-looking French woman.

Then through the summer twilight they drove back to their hotel, which was only a short distance away. The real life of Paris was just beginning as they returned home to go to bed, and the streets and cafés were thronged with pleasure seekers.

It was several days later that Jack and Alice went to spend the afternoon with the two French children. Monsieur and Madame de Tonville had offered to take Mr. and Mrs. Carter to see the pictures in the Louvre — one time a royal palace, now a great art gallery. It promised to be a most delightful personally conducted party, nevertheless the young folks decided to stay at home.

Louise and Alice were entertained by Marie, the ancient and honored servant of the house. Roger and Jack sat up in the studio and discussed everything that lay within the range of their vocabulary. For Jack's French was decidedly poor and Roger's English not much better. Fortunately Jack understood more than he could talk.

Presently there came sounds from below as of someone arriving, and up the studio stairs and into the room came no less a person than Monsieur Jean Noir. Jack was overjoyed. Monsieur Jean seemed almost as glad to see him.

He enquired for Monsieur de Tonville, and learning that that gentleman would not be at home for some hours, he proposed to the two boys to go out with him.

"This afternoon is free to me," he said. "Let us go. I will show you Paris, *mon ami* Jack."

"Will it be all right to leave the girls here?" asked Jack. "Can't they go?"

"They are with Marie," replied Roger. "We can go. I will tell Charles, my father's valet." So they went out and Jack was perfectly happy.

Monsieur Jean was so handsome, so brave, so delightful. They walked down the Champs Élysées while Monsieur Jean discoursed about Napoleon — how he had come as a boy to Paris and how he had conquered everything. He took them to the Arc de Triumph and explained the figures on that magnificent monument of triumph. He explained the name of the Avenue de la Grande Armée — the army that followed its leader through everything — which died, but would not surrender. Jack felt as if he were looking at one of these valiant men every time that they passed a splendidly uniformed and helmeted policeman, riding gallantly on his prancing steed.

Then, taking a *voiture,* they drove to the Hôtel des Invalides — built for a soldiers' home but known now only as the last resting place of the great genius, the leader of armies, Napoleon. There were hung the old battle-stained flags — there stood the guarding statues beside the marble tomb, and the golden light from the stained glass windows fell on the stately columns surrounding the dead hero.

"He was grand — superb — magnificent — but O *ciel,* he was cruel," said Monsieur Jean gravely,

saluting the tomb of the ancient commander. They turned and went out.

"Let us go up the Eiffel Tower," suggested Monsieur Jean, "and then home."

From the slender Eiffel Tower, constructed of steel and erected in the Champs de Mars at the time of a world's fair, they could look over all Paris — beautiful Paris — with the Seine flowing through it, under splendid bridges — almost at their feet was l'École Militare, where the young Napoleon had studied when he first came to Paris.

On the Ile de la Cité, which divides the Seine, stood the Cathedral of Notre Dame, with its two square towers, famous in story — beloved by all Paris. And places of fresh green dotted the gray city, where were the gardens of the Tuileries, the gardens of the Luxembourg Palace, the Bois de Boulogne and many others.

"O, how it is beautiful,— *charmante,*" cried Monsieur Jean. "There is but one Paris — so gay — so old — and yet always full of the fire of youth."

"But there have been horrible massacres, and tragedies here," said Jack, hesitating.

"Yes — that is the other side of the picture, *mon petit.* But Paris is well worth dying for. One could imagine a worse death. And there are no massacres now. That is all past and gone. But the glories — the traditions are here — they will never die. What matter if a few men die?"

"We are soldiers — we French — we do not fear to die," said Roger.

The Cathedral of Notre Dame

"But that's different," persisted Jack. "You said yourself, Monsieur Jean, that Napoleon was cruel. And so was the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and so were the awful executions in the French Revolution. Why, there were massacres right here, on the Champs de Mars."

"*Peste, mon ami* — have you nothing in your own history that is bad? I have read of Indian massacres."

Jack was silent for a moment.

"Yes, that's true," he answered. "But I've just been reading a book about the Revolution here. Our Revolution was so different."

Monsieur Jean shrugged his shoulders.

"*C'est vrai* (true)," he answered. "You Americans, you can fight for your country and remain cold — but we — we French, when we fight we are mad, *mon gars,* but we are good fighters, *n'est ce pas,* Roger?"

"*Mais oui, bien sur,* Monsieur Jean."

They drove along the drive on the Quai d'Orsay. Monsieur Jean was almost as full of Parisian history as Mr. Carter, armed as that gentleman was with Baedeker. But he was careful on this return ride to go through the modern boulevards and pointed out cafés, palaces and stores. It was late when they reached Monsieur de Tonville's apartment. The Carters had already gone leaving word that Jack might return alone *en voiture.* Monsieur Jean, however, volunteered to be escort and, as the *voiture* had departed, they decided to walk. They

strolled along in silence for a while. Jack was absorbed in his sensations of the afternoon, which had been many. Monsieur Jean whistled a gay soldier tune, breaking in every few moments to point out some place of interest. Suddenly Jack saw a dark-faced man come out of a door almost in front of them. He paused when he saw them — then, as if resolving that it was too late to retreat, proceeded. He saluted Monsieur Jean as they passed.

"Who was that, Monsieur Jean?" asked the boy, when they were at a safe distance. For Jack had recognized the darker of the two men who had fought at the hotel.

"That is one of my mechanicians — he is employed at the hangars."

"Is he to be trusted, Monsieur Jean? I saw him one night, fighting with another man." And he told the story of the struggle.

Monsieur Jean laughed. "They were fighting for a love letter, no doubt."

"No, Monsieur Jean. It was some engineer's plan, I am sure. There were many figures and drawings on it."

Monsieur Jean became more interested. He made the boy repeat his story.

"In what room did the fight begin?" he asked.

"In Herr Berkmann's room. He's a German architect."

"A German, *hein?* — tell me, Jack, was the paper something like this?"

Monsieur Jean looked about him. For the mo-

ment the street was almost deserted. He took a black leather case from his breast pocket and drew an envelope from this. In the envelope was a paper which he showed to Jack.

"That is the paper, Monsieur Jean," exclaimed the boy. "It is the same thing, I am sure."

"That paper has never been out of my hands, Jack. It is impossible. It must have been like it."

"The numbers and figures were the same," persisted Jack. "What is it?"

"It is a plan for a new kind of military aeroplane which I have worked out for the government. You must not mention it — *jamais* —*jamais* you understand. You have not seen it. Nevertheless, you have seen it twice, it seems. And in the room of a German — Jack, I must see your German. I will come to dinner some night, *hein?* And maybe bring a friend. What will your father say?"

"They would be awfully glad to see you, I know."

"*Bien,* I will come soon — soon."

"And you will watch that man?"

"*Tiens* — yes — though you said he fought for the paper. I think he is honest, Jack, but I will watch. Did he see you with me?"

"I don't know. He tried to go back when he saw us — back into that house there. But maybe he would not know me."

"Are you sure that you know him?"

"I never could forget his face."

"*Eh, bien* — expect me soon to dinner. Watch your German friend and let me know if anything

happens. *Peutêtre ce n'est rien, mais enfin, il faut voir.* (Perhaps it is nothing, but it is best to watch.) I would not that the German army should know of my plan."

CHAPTER VI

THE TWINS AT MERS — THE SAND CARNIVAL — THE PROCESSION

Meanwhile the twins were having a delightful time at Mers. Léon and Louis, who had been spending the summer there, knew the nicest places to play; and all the many French children were their friends.

That first week the mayor had proclaimed a sand carnival and there was to be a prize for the group of children who should make the most attractive object out of the hard white sand. The children of Mers had been practicing through the summer. Nevertheless the twins decided to join the competition, and Louis and Léon urged them to try with them. But the twins were proud; they wanted to make something exclusively American. As older people were allowed to assist, they were willing to permit Miss Ford to help them, however.

They spent the two first days on the sand practicing. They were not very skillful. Bob wanted to make a fort; Katherine wanted to make a bridge. Miss Ford thought that the fort was the best,— but Bob ended by making a tunnel. The fateful day arrived; and from early morning the beach was crowded with folk, big and little.

Bob made a long tunnel and then Katherine and

Miss Ford constructed two towers to stand at either end. "It was a beautiful tunnel," Bob told Madame Roulet, "but it somehow didn't seem to take the prize,— even though we had an American flag waving from the tower!"

When they had finished, they walked around to see the things the other children had made.

There were some wonderful constructions! Louis and Léon, with some assistance from their mother, had built a windmill. The wings seemed almost ready to blow in the wind! Dolls stood at the door and looked from the windows. It was beautiful to behold.

Some older boys had made an automobile, which was big enough to allow two youngsters to get in it. Another group had made a model aeroplane; another a farmhouse, through which Noah's ark animals paraded.

Bob and Katherine acknowledged that they were fairly beaten. "Why didn't we make things like that?" said they sadly. They considered Miss Ford somewhat of a failure.

The mayor himself, an impressive gentleman in a uniform, called the children together and complimented them on their work.

"You will all be sculptors or architects, I am sure," he said. "We have seen many objects of every kind here on the sand. They are all worthy of prizes — I wish I could give one to each. But I must bestow it on the beautiful automobile, which to my mind is the prettiest and most lifelike creation.

I wish also to make mention of a tunnel, a very fine piece of constructive work made by two little American children. They are about the youngest to enter the competition. I am sure the boy will some day be a great engineer and build cities and tunnels and railroads."

"Does he mean me?" gasped Bob. "I didn't think that we did anything so fine as that."

"Hurrah!" cried Katherine, and rushed over to Madame Roulet. "Did you hear that?" she asked. "That was Bob and me! Won't mother be proud when she hears we 'most got a prize?"

Louis and Léon were a little disappointed not to have been mentioned, but Mademoiselle consoled them by saying that doubtless the Americans had been named out of courtesy, since they were guests. And after all was over, the children, over a hundred in number, joined hands and danced to and fro on the sand, while a blind old man played on a fiddle.

The twins thought this a most delightful way to end the day, and danced till they were fairly tired out.

"We do this almost every night," said Léon. "It is our way of saying good night to the sand and the sea."

The next day they went in bathing. There were funny little mushroom tents scattered all over the beach and each person was supposed to have one. The twins, who had been in bathing only once before in their lives, were perfectly happy. They wanted

to stay in the water all the morning. But Madame Roulet only allowed a fifteen minutes of joy.

"To-morrow you can stay in longer," she said. "But for the first time it is enough."

The twins, who had talked French with Mademoiselle for nearly a year, were able to speak to the Roulets and understand what was said. And as practice makes perfect, they soon became almost like French children in their speech and appearance. They wore socks and pinafores and large straw hats and were very happy. Miss Ford was able to send back good reports of their health and happiness.

On top of the great chalk cliffs was a level stretch of grass and wild flowers, and here the children often went to play games. Near the edge of the cliff stood a great statue of "Our Lady of Falaise," the patron saint of the neighboring fishermen. The children often played in the shadow of the statue, or dodged around it in games of tag. Louis and Léon had at first been a little shocked, but gradually became used to it. The sun was hot on the level fields and they were grateful for the shade. Louis, who was inclined to be thoughtful, remarked one day, "Our Lady protects us children by her shadow, just as she protects the fishermen."

Miss Ford was pleased with the idea. She wrote to Mrs. Carter that she could imagine no more delightful playmates for the twins than Louis and Léon.

"They are so *bien elevés* — so altogether satisfactory and quaint. I wish you could see them all

dancing on the sand beach every evening at sundown. It is a lovely sight. The old fiddler plays the jolliest tunes; 'Sur le Pont d'Avignon,' and all the rest of them. The twins act as if they had done nothing but dance all their lives. They bob up and down like rosy apples.

"Monsieur and Madame Roulet have grown so fond of them. They have been a bit homesick from time to time, little dears, but on the whole they are enjoying themselves hugely. And they are talking French as if they had been born to it. We all go in bathing and afterwards drink the warm goat's milk. It is so healthy."

"O, that horrid stuff," remarked Alice, when Mrs. Carter read part of the letter. Even Mr. Carter was compelled to make up a face at the recollection.

One morning not long after their coming to Mers, the twins were called in from play and clad in their best clothes.

"What is it?" they asked. "It's not Sunday — Is there to be another carnival or a party?"

"No, indeed," answered Mademoiselle. "Today is the procession to the shrine of our Lady of Falaise. There is a solemn mass for the souls of the dead fishermen."

"Oh, a procession! Can we march in it?"

"Assuredly. And you must make haste or you will be too late."

Soon the twins were ready, clean and scrubbed, and they ran out to find Louis and Léon and the rest

of the family waiting in the garden. Everyone was dressed in their best and there was an air of subdued excitement and solemnity. Presently came sounds of singing from down the hill.

"It is the choir boys from the Cathedral at Amiens," said Madame Roulet. "They all come from far and near, all the priests and bishops — for this is the most solemn event of the year next to the season of the Passion of our Lord — and the Feast of All Souls. There are none of the humble folk here who have not lost a son or a husband in the terrible sea. Ah, it may look bright and blue and kindly on these warm summer days, but in the winter it is frightful. Then indeed do we need the prayers of our Lady."

The twins listened, their eyes wide open to catch the first glimpse of the procession. Presently up the white road came a choir boy bearing aloft a cross. Then came more boys, robed in white and purple, singing the Latin chants. Then came priests in all manner of gorgeous robes and finally a long procession of village folk and summer visitors.

"Do you see that fine old woman there?" said Madame to Miss Ford. "She with the white kerchief and headdress — Look, she has her handkerchief to her eyes. Her oldest son perished in last December's storms. Ah, there are many here who mourn this day. It is no holiday procession, I assure you."

The whole family now joined with the townsfolk and proceeded up the hill to the grassy meadows.

"Wonderfully hideous"

The twins marched along in silence beside Louis and Léon. They were excited and somehow uncomfortable. A brown-faced fisherman near them had tears running down his cheeks and it was not right for men to cry. Had not their father often told them so?

At the shrine mass was chanted by the priests, while all the people knelt in the flowers and grass. At the ringing of the bell every head was bowed in reverence. Even the smallest children seemed to understand that this was a moment of deepest meaning.

"What do they ring the bell for?" whispered Katherine to Mademoiselle.

"Hush, my child. It is the elevation of the Host. You cannot understand. Shut your eyes and say your prayers."

Then prayers were offered for many of the dead, by name, and sobs were heard from those who had lost their nearest and dearest.

The twins were rather glad when it was all over. They could not understand what was sung, in the Norman-Latin, and they disliked the solemnity and quiet of it all.

"I'm glad it's over, aren't you?" asked Bob of Louis.

"No, indeed. You must not say that. It is for our dear sailors who have been killed in the sea. I think it is most beautiful."

Bob was a little disgusted to have his friend so unsympathetic. It was not until they had had a good race on the sand that he could quite forgive

him. Katherine and Léon walked down hand in hand. They had been given two tall candles, by Madame, which had been consecrated by the Bishop. They were going to take them home and keep them in memory of the solemn occasion.

One day Madame Roulet suggested a picnic. They got some of the peasant carts and drove across country to the farm on the estates of the Duke of Orson.

Here was a long table under the trees and the farmer's wife had the most delicious things to sell; fresh rolls and wonderful unsalted butter,— goat's milk cheese, honey and chocolate, creamy milk, and fine white bread. The children ate till they could eat no more. Then they went in to see Marie, the farmer's daughter, churning butter. Madame Roulet wished a glass of fresh buttermilk.

"It tasted awful sour," wrote Bob to his mother. "It's the stuff that's left when you've taken the butter out of the milk. You take it out with a churn. It's wood and you turn it around. I didn't like it but Madame says it's healthful. I don't like cheese either, 'less there's lots of cream and sugar on it."

They were allowed to go into the stables to see some of the farm horses, great gray and dappled creatures, with braided mane and tail. The heavy brass studded harness hung beside them. Then there were the pigs to see, and the cattle, and finally they went to the weaving room where the maid-servants all sat and wove garments and rugs by hand. The bright threads fairly flew to and fro under their

practiced touch. The girls were chatting and laughing, their blue eyes full of merriment and their round, rosy faces dimpled at each merry jest. Too soon it was time to go home. The children scrambled up over the high wheels of the carts and sat on the straw, while the peasants who drove them sang jolly folk songs, and cracked their whip as an accompaniment.

So passed the happy days at Mers,— sunny and jolly.

CHAPTER VII

PARIS — VERSAILLES — THE LOUVRE

Jack now followed Herr Berkmann around like a dog. He rather liked the big, good-natured man, yet he felt that he ought not to like him. Without doubt he was a spy and an enemy of Monsieur Jean. Three days after the afternoon they had spent together a note came from Monsieur Jean asking to be allowed to call upon them with a friend that evening at the dinner hour. Were they to be at home?

"It seems funny — not like a Frenchman," remarked Mrs. Carter.

"Monsieur Jean is a good fellow, Kate. Let him come and bring his friend. He was most kind to us at Rheims. He seems to have taken a fancy to Jack."

So a favorable reply was dispatched. All that day Jack was in a state of excitement. He hardly dared to leave the hotel for fear that in his absence Herr Berkmann would suddenly depart.

At last came evening; Monsieur Jean and a slight, gray-haired priest, who was introduced as Père Alphonse. The priest proved a pleasant addition to the party — very intelligent and witty. They were soon laughing gayly. Dinner, however, was nearly

over, before Herr Berkmann came in and took his accustomed seat at a near-by table.

Mr. Carter, who was feeling cheerful and hospitably inclined, immediately called over to him to come and join them. Herr Berkmann did so and was introduced to Monsieur Jean and Père Alphonse. It was late before the party broke up and Jack and Alice were thoroughly tired. They were glad when Mrs. Carter rose and left the gentlemen to smoke and chat, although Jack was anxious for some word with Monsieur Jean.

It seemed, however, that Mr. Carter and the two Frenchmen strolled out, leaving Herr Berkmann to his studies, and it was midnight before the American returned, delighted with Paris, and the gay boulevards and cafés. Jack, who had not been able to sleep, heard his father telling about it to his mother.

"That priest was certainly lively, Kate. If there is a spot in Paris that he does not know, I would like to hear of it. I think he is one of the most intelligent men I ever met. But how charming Monsieur Jean Noir is, don't you think so?"

"Indeed, yes, Robert, but it's so late and I'm so sleepy."

The next morning Jack was surprised to find a letter at his plate. It proved to be from Monsieur Jean; just a few words, asking for secrecy. Not a word to anyone, father, mother or sister. "Watch Herr Berkmann and let me know if he should take his leave. I will see you soon. J. N."

Jack could hardly wait to hear more.

The days passed swiftly amidst the fascinations of Paris. Jack and Alice were never tired of watching the people on the river front, and the little boats that passed under the bridges through the midst of the great city. It seemed so strange to them, to have an island in the center of Paris! They liked to stand on one of the many bridges over which they had to pass to get anywhere from their hotel, and look up or down at the other beautiful arches over the Seine. They were amazed at seeing horses brought down to drink and swim. It was like the cattle country at home.

The Cathedral of Notre Dame, on the City Island, proved a most popular place. From the garden at the rear many strange sights could be seen. The great building with its two square towers, its forest of slender flying buttresses, and its wonderfully hideous gargoyles, appealed to them strongly.

They spent one day at Fontainebleau, where Mrs. Carter was at last delighted by the sight of some real trees. Jack pictured his old friend, Napoleon, sitting there in the palace, knowing that his days of glory were over. Then on another day they went to the oldest church in Paris, the great basilica of St. Denis, the burial place of so many kings of France, and to the "Hôtel Cluny," with its delightful museum and art gallery. Alice's favorite place, however, was the Saint Chappelle, built by Louis IX, St. Louis, and preserved for years as the royal chapel. The dainty pinnacles and wonderful walls of stained glass and tracery appealed to her as noth-

ing else had. She even broke into her precious twenty-franc piece and bought some photographs. Later, on the same day, she was surprised to find that she had bought several things. Two francs were gone. She wrote carefully in a notebook,

Handkerchief, 1 franc.
Photo, 50 centimes.
China animal, 50 centimes.

Jack had already spent a franc on a photograph at the aviation meet. Also he had insisted on buying some American soda water at an American drug store for Monsieur Jean and Roger, so that he had almost three francs checked up against him.

Jack was very anxious to visit the Morgue, the outside of which he had seen, and the inside of which Pierre had described to him.

But Mr. Carter promptly said "No."

"You didn't like the 'dead-uns' in the tombs in Rouen. I should not think that real 'dead-uns' would appeal to you."

"It is too gruesome to think of, even," declared Mrs. Carter.

"I think we will go to the Louvre instead," said Mr. Carter.

"Oh, Daddy, do we have to?"

"Yes, once, anyway! you cannot escape it," answered Mr. Carter.

"It's so terribly big," complained Alice. "If I were building a palace I'd build something small and pretty."

"But where would you put all your attendants and servants? A palace has to be big and contain a great deal of room, you know. You have to have audience chambers and grand ballrooms. But the Louvre hasn't been a palace for a long time. It's full of pictures and statues and curios," said Mr. Carter.

Facing the great stairway, high as if on the prow of a ship, stands the mighty figure of the winged Victory. Heroic, full of life, of motion, she seems about to launch into space.

The Carters stopped on their way up the stairs.

"I feel as if I could hear her coming, with a sound as if of a mighty wind," said Mrs. Carter.

"But where's her head?" inquired Alice.

"It is gone, unfortunately. You know these Grecian statues were most of them dug from ruins. No wonder that some of them got broken."

"Thank goodness they didn't try to restore it," said Mrs. Carter.

"I don't like them without heads," persisted Alice.

They went first into the Salon Carré, where are to be found some of the most valuable works of art in the whole great collection. Mr. Carter allowed the children to pick out their own favorites. They wandered about until Alice suddenly discovered the lovely Madonna with the two holy children by Raphael.

She was delighted at the colors and the little

castle in the background. "And those darling babies!"

Jack had stopped in front of an enormous picture which he was studying with great interest. There were so many people in it. Some of them seemed to be feasting in the courtyard.

"Is that a Grecian house?" he asked, pointing to the columns in the background.

"Those look like Grecian columns, but the painting is by an Italian, Paul Veronese. It has very wonderful coloring, Jack. That is one of the peculiar things about Veronese's work. He likes, too, to put in little dogs.

"The picture is supposed to represent the marriage supper at Canaea. But most of those old artists managed to put in so many of their friends and patrons in fine clothes, and dogs and other animals, that one hardly recognizes the Bible subjects. This picture was brought from Venice by Napoleon, while he was still a conqueror. You will see a lot more pictures by Veronese when we go to Italy."

Mr. Carter pointed out the place where the celebrated Mona Lisa, the portrait of a woman by Leonardo da Vinci, had hung before it was stolen.

"What good do you suppose it ever did the thief to get it?" wondered Mrs. Carter. "He couldn't possibly sell it, when every child almost would recognize it. And how do you suppose he ever got it out of the buildings?"

"I am afraid I cannot answer," said Mr. Carter. "It is certainly very strange."

From the Salon Carré they went through the hall of the older Italian school.

Alice was very much amused by some of the earliest paintings, much to the disgust of some artists who were eagerly studying them.

They passed slowly but steadily through the grand gallery, which Jack said was full of queer, religious pictures and then were relieved by the delightful Dutch scenes and portraits. Mr. Carter called their attention to the deep, rich colorings and fine effects of light and shade.

"But I think I like those blue and green saint pictures in that queer church best," said Alice thoughtfully.

"What does she mean?" asked Mr. Carter.

"The Puvis de Chavannes decorations in the Panthéon," suggested Mrs. Carter. "The pictures of St. Genevieve."

The stone pavements got to be very tiresome after a while, and the pictures blurred into one mass of color.

So they decided to put off the modern pictures till another day.

"The Millet peasants will have to wait," said Mrs. Carter.

"And the Venus de Milo, too," said Mr. Carter. "You know you kiddies have often seen pictures of her."

"She hasn't any arms, has she?" asked Jack.

"But her head is so beautiful, at least in the pictures," said Alice. "I would like to come and see her some other day."

Mr. Carter was anxious to see one of the sights of Paris, that was the great sewers, those enormous tubes which pierce the foundations of the city, and through which one can pass in a boat. He had read of the escape through them of one Jean Val Jean in a book by Victor Hugo. Jack wanted to go, too, but his father finally refused to take him, and went with Herr Berkmann.

"I am glad you did not go," he said afterwards. "If I had had you to take care of, too, I think I would have had a real fit of nerves. It was really horrible, so dark and clammy, with only the torches to guide us. It was like living one of Poe's ghastly tales."

"Let us go to Versailles this afternoon to take the taste out," suggested Mrs. Carter.

So they went, on top of a tram, which delighted the children. But Mrs. Carter hated going through the tunnels, and insisted that they must return inside. Mr. Carter thought that they might drive back over the very road, as he said, that the Paris mob had taken when they went to demand bread from the king and queen.

"But we aren't there yet, why do we have to talk about going home?" said Jack.

Alice thought the palace itself too big and too much like the Louvre, but she admired the great silk-curtained bed that had been Marie Antoinette's.

"Now I like the portrait of Louis XIV with his family on Olympus," said Mr. Carter with a chuckle.

In the rear the grounds are terraced to a splendid fountain, and then, as far as the eye can reach, stretch the park and gardens. They walked to the little, tree-shaded pond, where stands the "Petit Trianon," that royal farmhouse where the Queen played so delightfully at the simple life, and even churned butter to prove what a humble person she was.

"I should think it would have made them madder to have her pretend that way when they were starving," volunteered Jack.

"I fancy that's about right," answered his father.

"The palaces are dreadfully big," groaned Jack.

"The Trianon isn't," said Alice. "I like this, I think it would be fun to live here."

They drove back to the city through the evening light, and Mr. Carter described vividly some of the terrible days of the Revolution.

The gardens of the Tuileries looked dim and mysterious, and the children felt sure that it was full of hungry men and women demanding justice and vengeance.

"The palace of the Tuileries has seen some pretty exciting moments," said Mr. Carter thoughtfully. "You children must remember it when you come to studying your French history. You remember the Place de la Bastille, where we went one day on top of a 'bus? The Bastille itself was torn down

Where the Queen played at simple life — The little trianon

by the people in a frenzy of liberty, but it well represented the tyranny of the old kings of France. Why, anyone could be popped into it without trial, just by the king's say-so."

"We rebelled for less than that in our Revolution," said Jack.

"That is one reason why it was marked with no such terrible deeds of violence as took place in the French Revolution. One can hardly blame them for being blood-thirsty after so many years of oppression."

"It must be awful to be starving," said Jack after a thoughtful pause.

"Pray heaven you never may be, Jack. I came pretty near it once, the year of the great blizzard, 'the white year,' out on the ranch, when we were lost for ten days. But to starve in the midst of plenty, that is what turns men into wolves."

That evening Mr. Carter read to them a delightful account of Paris during the Commune in 1879, part of a journal of Madame de Hegermann-Linden. It described barricades at the Place Vendome and the slaughter there, the struggles in the Boulevarde Housmann and their experiences trying to save the family cow from the hands of the mob.

"This is new history, Alice," said Mrs. Carter. "The people who lived through those days are living now. Think of a siege with all its suffering right here in Paris. It does not seem possible."

"The French certainly are an astonishing peo-

ple," said Mr. Carter. "They have a feast of blood one day and of flowers and triumph the next. They are so gay, so triumphant, so sure, whether they are killing or caressing. Come, Kate, the night is yet young and as we leave for parts unknown in another day, let's go out and *flâner les boulevards* (stroll on the avenue)."

Half an hour later they were walking through the Palais Royal, full of shops and light, down the Avenue de l'Opera to the Boulevard de Capucines. It was all brilliant with lights, full of pleasure seekers. Little tables and chairs on the sidewalks were crowded with people, sipping the light French wines, eating delicious-looking ices and *pâtisseries*. Soldiers in handsome uniforms, actors and actresses, young gentlemen in the height of fashion, tourists, all were there and all were enjoying the evening, and the gayety around them. Autos and carriages passed in rapid succession through the avenues and streets. There was sound of music and laughter.

"How would you like to live here, Kate?" asked Mr. Carter, as they sat at one of the tables and ate cakes and ices.

"It doesn't seem as if one could have a home here."

"What, do you not call the de Tonvilles' a home?"

"Yes — surely. I had forgotten it in all the noise and glamour to-night."

"It is like every other large city — you don't see

the home life — you see the street life. They are quite different."

"I think I like the home life best."

"Of course you do, you dear home-pussycat. But don't you like this, too?"

"I do, Daddy," said Alice, with her eyes fixed on some soldiers at the next table. Their uniforms were so handsome — their gilt buttons so attractive.

Jack sat in silence. He was wondering when he should see Monsieur Jean. He had seen twice that evening the face of the tall, fair man who had carried off the paper. It had only been a glimpse in the crowd, but he was sure.

The next day they bade farewell to the de Tonvilles and left their address for Monsieur Jean.

Jack wrote him a note which he posted secretly, telling their permanent address. He also spoke of seeing the man who had taken the paper. Herr Berkmann was still at the hotel. He begged Monsieur Jean to let him know should anything happen.

The day after they left Paris.

CHAPTER VIII

MONT ST. MICHEL — AN ADVENTURE ON THE SAND — BERTRAND DU GUESCLIN

From Paris they went to Averanche, reaching there late in the afternoon. Averanche, situated on a hill overlooking the Bay of St. Michel, is one of the oldest towns of Normandy. Here Henry II of England did penance for the murder of Thomas à Becket — so Mr. Carter, instructed by his guide book, informed them.

They were to spend the night here and go on to Mont St. Michel in the morning. Mr. Carter left the family at the hotel, weary after their day's travel. He himself wanted exercise. So he prevailed upon an aged man to show him the Cathedral.

When he joined the others for dinner he excited Alice's envy by describing a wonderful modern gargoyle on the Cathedral — with a stove-pipe hat on his head. She and Jack had been deeply impressed with the ugly gargoyles of Notre Dame — those strange, grotesque creatures of stone, half gutter pipe and half ornament. But a modern gargoyle — that was a delightful idea.

That evening Mr. Carter proposed another class in French history. Jack, protesting, was appointed teacher.

"You ought to be able to ask some good ques-

tions, now, Jack," said Mr. Carter. "After our weeks of travel."

"It's just four weeks since we landed," remarked Mrs. Carter.

"Come, Professor," Mr. Carter said.

"Oh, dear me, there were so many things in French history. Tell us about Mont St. Michel."

"That is rather an intelligent idea, but it isn't a question."

"When was it built, Daddy?"

"That's better. Some time in the ninth century, the Archangel Michael descended on to the top of the mountain. Of course he did not stay there, but pious people from all over France began to make pilgrimages in the hopes of seeing him again. A small convent was built, and later a magnificent one. This had to be garrisoned and fortified to prevent its falling into the hands of the English during the French and English wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Louis XI — anyone know his date?"

"Some time in the middle of the fifteenth century, Daddy," said Alice.

"Well, that's near enough. Anyway, he founded the order of the Knights of St. Michel, who held meetings in the great hall of the Knights. After the French Revolution the government turned the old abbey into a prison, and some of it, as you can imagine, was injured. Then, in the middle of the nineteenth century, a more intelligent government undertook restorations.

"So much for outline; now let us go back to Bertrand du Guesclin, an old friend of mine, whom you read about in the White Company, on the steamer."

"Oh, Father, did he go to Mont St. Michel?"

"Just wait a minute. I hope I can remember to tell you his story correctly. There are lots of details which you can get in the book I used to read, called 'Cameos from English History.'"

"Du Guesclin was born in Brittany and his career is like one of Arthur's Knights. He was always fighting, either for Brittany or France, and he seems to have been a model of chivalry. Whether in single combat or in a mêlée he was apt to come out ahead, and yet was such a delightful gentleman that even his enemies would send for him to dine with them on the eve of battle. He began his career by winning a wrestling match when only a lad. Then he won a tournament which he entered without giving his name, and where he refused, out of respect, to engage his father in combat. His father, who had always treated him like a dog, was very much surprised and pleased by his filial respect. After that he went into fighting seriously, relieved the Siege of Rennes, and it was then that he dined with the English force, whose captain was captivated by his courage and wit. He was a very prominent figure in the Siege of Dinan, and it was at a duel which he fought there with one of his English foes that he met his wife, Tiphaîne la Fé — she was called — for she claimed to foretell the future.

He never believed much in her prophecies, but was very much in love with her, nevertheless. They passed their honeymoon at Pontorson near Mont St. Michel. This was somewhat rudely interrupted by the arrival of the English troop, whose commander challenged him to combat. I cannot tell you all of the battles that this remarkable man was in; his wife too seems to have defended his castle with great valor during his absence. Du Guesclin was unfortunate in an expedition to Spain against the cruel tyrant, Don Pedro, and was taken prisoner by the Black Prince in the battle of Navaretta. He was kept a prisoner for some time, but was finally released in the most charming manner. The Black Prince — Alice, who was the Black Prince?"

"Why, Edward — the son of —"

"Yes, somebody's son, but whose?"

"Edward the —"

"Edward, the Black Prince, son of Edward III, King of England, Victor at Crécy and Poitiers."

"Right, Kate. Children, I'm glad your mother knows. Well, he told Du Guesclin that he could go free if he would swear not to bear arms against the English.

"'I would rather die in prison,' said Du Guesclin.

"'Then fight as you will, but you must pay a ransom.'

"'I haven't any money,' said Du Guesclin.

"'Fix the sum yourself,' replied the Black Prince.

"'I'm a pretty valuable person,' said Du Gues-

clin. 'I cannot rate myself at less than one hundred thousand double crowns of gold.'

"'You're laughing at me,' answered his captor. 'It's a king's ransom. I will let you off for a quarter of it.'

"Finally it was fixed for a slightly lower sum, though Bertram considered this in the nature of a slight. He had not much hope of obtaining it anyway, but his friends came valiantly to his aid, although he used to give away portions of the money raised to poor pensioners. His wife seems to have been very much like him. She collected a large sum of money, but instead of helping pay his debt, she used it to raise a company of men, much to the delight of Du Guesclin, who at once assumed command. Later Du Guesclin was made constable of France. He had built a house for his wife at Mont St. Michel, where she had stayed during his various fighting expeditions. Now, however, he lived with her at Caen. The English, in the meantime, had taken possession of Brittany, but Du Guesclin reconquered it, for the Bretons. Then he started a campaign in Guienne, but there he died, at the siege of the castle Chateau-Neuf-Raudon. The English commander had promised to surrender to him on a certain day, but Du Guesclin died of a fever before that day. So the Englishman refused to surrender to anyone else, and insisted on laying his sword and the city keys on the bier of the dead hero. Such, in brief, was Du Guesclin. His story is interwoven with the story of the invasion of

France and all of Brittany about us. Now, does anyone know the kings of France?"

Even Mrs. Carter shook her head.

"I don't, either. But I don't think it very important, there were so many of them. Just tell me this, somebody, Who was king of France at the time of Du Guesclin, and the Black Prince?"

There was an ominous silence.

"Must I answer that myself? Well, I have an idea it was two or three kings. Philip VI, Jean, and Charles V. You see, there were a lot of them, for Edward III was king of England during these three reigns. It was Charles VI who opposed Henry V at Harfleur.

"Any more questions, Jack?"

"Daddy, I'm too sleepy. Can't we put it off?"

"All right, son. Go to bed and pleasant dreams to you."

Early the next morning they took the train to Pontorson and from thence the tram across the causeway to Mont St. Michel.

The long, straight white road stretched over the sand from the mainland to the island where towered the battlemented *abbaye*.

"We should all be on chargers, Father," said Jack. "This old car seems out of place."

Mont St. Michel rose high above them, the exact spot, the driver explained, where, in the ninth century, St. Michael himself had descended. And almost as far as they could see stretched the sand.

Mr. Carter had timed their visit carefully so that

they might be there to witness one of the highest tides.

They left their bags at the little hotel and started on a tour of inspection at once.

A long flight of stairs led up to the great gray fortifications above, and indeed most of the streets led straight up, steeply, and ended there. The buildings were in good repair and seemed filled to overflowing with romantic histories.

Down into the dungeons they were led, where hideous wax figures represented bygone horrors — far worse than any offered by the Eden Musée. Jack grew very quiet and subdued and hurried back up the old stone stairs as fast as possible. He preferred the battlements and walks along the terraces and platforms, where one could see the sands stretching away to the sea, or look up at the stern old granite abbey, La Merveille, towering above the sheer descent of rock. Mr. Carter, armed with a pocket guide, reminded them that it was here that their old hero, Du Guesclin, had built the house for his wife, Tiphaîne.

They wandered through the vast Salle des Chevaliers, where the knights of the order of St. Michel were wont to meet, and through the Norman arched *refectoire,* where the monks had held sway before the old fortress abbey had been turned into a prison by a Republican government after the French Revolution.

"Fortunately, to-day it is in the possession of a commission of restoration," Mrs. Carter said.

"One wonders there is anything left of it, where so many have occupied it."

"Not to mention the attacks and sieges it has endured."

Mr. Carter then told them the grim story of the company of English soldiers swallowed by the quicksands, after a fierce battle on the sands.

"But, Daddy, there are people walking there on the sand," said Alice.

"It is not all quicksands. There are many places that are perfectly safe, but you have to have a guide," answered her father.

"Oh, can't we go?"

"Why, I think so, right after lunch. But first we must see if Madame Poulard's wonderful omelets and chicken are as wonderful as Baedeker would have you think."

They went to the hotel and Mrs. Carter, with the children, went to prepare for lunch, while Mr. Carter ordered his chicken and omelet in person. Indeed, he stayed to watch the preparation of it, standing before the great fire, while the chicken turned and sputtered before him on the spit.

Directly after lunch a guide was obtained who bade them hasten, if they would walk on the sands. "At four the water returns," he added significantly.

"Is it high tide then?" asked Jack.

"You wait, Jacky, my boy, I am told it is worth crossing the ocean to see it from the battlements."

"I think I won't go," Mrs. Carter said. "Sand is sand, after all."

"Mother's afraid," laughed Alice.

"Indeed, do you think I would let you all go if I thought there were danger, Miss Alice?" asked her mother. "I must write to the twins."

Once down on the sand it seemed perfectly normal, like any other beach. Mr. Carter was inclined to laugh at the old legends, as he called them, although the serious Bréton peasant who accompanied them assured him that at such and such a place a whole regiment had suddenly been swallowed up, and had disappeared.

"Let me have the camera, Dad," asked Jack. "I want to get a picture of the place from here."

"All right, only be careful, son. I've got some pictures on that film that I don't want to lose." Mr. Carter turned to ask some questions of the guide, and the two children lingered, taking pictures. Then they wanted to look through Mr. Carter's field glasses.

Jack slung the camera over his shoulder and the two looked out towards the sea. It would soon be time for the turning of the tide.

"Come, Alice, come, boy, our guide says we ought to be starting back." Mr. Carter's voice came to them across the sand. Startled, they turned to race after him. Jack tripped and fell, but was up again in a minute and caught up with Alice. They all reached the stone steps together.

As they went up, Mr. Carter turned to Jack. "Camera O. K.?"

"Yes, Dad." Jack felt over his shoulders.

There seemed to be two cases there, containing the camera and the field glasses.

As they reached the street, Alice whispered to Jack:

"Let's take a picture of Dad discussing prices with the guide. Let me take it."

"Sure, you get it off my back."

It was then Alice discovered that the camera was gone, only the case hung over Jack's shoulder. The two children were filled with consternation.

"It must have fallen out when you tumbled down," said Alice softly. "What shall we do?"

"I'll have to go back for it. Don't — don't tell Daddy. I'll hurry and be sure to find it. You go on and say I stopped at the hotel for something, that I'll follow in a minute."

Mr. Carter and the guide were out of sight around the corner. Without waiting for Alice's half-smothered "Jack — the tide!" he ran back. She stood in dismay, hesitating whether to join the others or to wait for Jack.

"Hurry Alice — Jack — run to the hotel and get your mother. The tide will soon be here and we must see it from the battlements." Alice rushed off to the hotel. "Jack'll be back before we get there," she thought hopefully.

Jack ran back as quickly as he could. He felt hot and trembly.

"What will Dad say?" he kept repeating to himself. He thought of the quicksands, of the possibility of the camera being swallowed up like the

army of old. He did not think of the tide, which in a short time would sweep like a great wall of water with the roar and speed of an express train. He thought it would be easy to retrace their steps, but the sand seemed all the same as it stretched away. The hopelessness of his task came over him. The camera was so small in comparison with the vast stretches about him.

He had the glasses still, and looking through them, thought he could distinguish a small, black object a little way off. He started towards it, with trembling steps. There might be a quicksand in between. He wished he had a stick to feel his way with. The black object seemed as far away as ever, and now the firm rock of Mont Michel was also receding. He looked through the glasses again. As he did so, something seemed to take hold of his foot. He looked down. One of his feet was buried in sand up to the ankle. He could only draw it up by lying flat and crawling. Were the quicksands everywhere? The wind seemed to be rising. It was moaning and sighing in his ears. Was there to be a storm?

The sound was like the distant roar and rush of a great wind. But the sky was clear, the sun shone bright. He swept the sand with his glasses and then looked through them out to sea. Far, far out something seemed to be moving — a long line of white and gray — and then the meaning of it all came to him. The sound in his ears, the sinister murmur, was not the wind. It was the roaring of floods of

water, the incoming tidal wave. Jack turned, for a moment his heart was faint and his knees trembled.

But it was only for a moment. The great gray battlement of Mont Michel, the white stairs were not so very far, and not for nothing had he practiced running in Texas on the school baseball team.

Run, Jack — it is a fierce race with a relentless enemy this time!

Mr. and Mrs. Carter, with Alice, were standing on the battlements when Mr. Carter asked again, "Where is Jack?"

"Father," said Alice finally, worried at his absence, "Father, he dropped your camera on the sand and went back for it."

"Went back for it, Alice!" cried Mrs. Carter.

Mr. Carter did not stop for question or answer, but ran down the street as fast as possible; even as he ran the same sinister and distant rushing murmur came to his ears. "The quicksands and the tide." In his terror for the boy Mr. Carter hardly knew which to fear the most. It seemed hours to him before he reached the stairs, but the street sounds deadened the roar of the incoming water and the danger did not appear so imminent until, from the tip of the stone stairs, he looked across the sands at the rushing line of foaming, seething water.

At the bottom step were half a dozen peasants who, frantically gesticulating and rapidly talking, were helping a small, limp figure to mount. Others had seen Jack's danger and had helped him to safety.

Mr. Carter, with an arm about the trembling boy, shook hands with the men and thanked them with deep feeling. Then they hurried back to find Mrs. Carter and Alice. It was a sober group that stood on the battlements and watched the sweep of the water around the great rocky mount of safety.

The camera was forgotten by all but Jack, who could not forget.

"If only I had been able to find it.— If only I had not lost it.— If only —" he kept repeating to himself.

Presently two gentlemen approached them and one of them asked in French whether they had lost anything or whether they were in some trouble. Mr. Carter answered that the boy had almost lost his life in the incoming tide.

"Oh, we heard of that — we thought this might be the boy. We felicitate you on your escape, monsieur."

There was some little conversation and then the strangers asked to be recommended to a good hotel.

Mr. Carter replied a little shortly that he, too, was a stranger.

"I only know what Baedeker recommends," said he.

They then parted and after the two men had gone Alice asked her father why he had not mentioned "Madame Poulard."

"Well, when a perfect stranger gets too friendly and sympathetic and then wants to go to your hotel,

why in Texas we lock up our purses, and hunt up the guns; Alice, come, it's time for supper."

With a laugh he turned away from the sea and started back to the hotel.

CHAPTER IX

VITRÉ — LE MANS — THE CAMERA IS FOUND

Two days later the Carters started bright and early for Vitré en route for Le Mans. Mr. Carter had been anxious to see one of the really old French towns — more or less unspoiled by tourists, so they spent a delightful three hours at Vitré, taking their lunch at an odd little restaurant, and wandering through the narrow streets. There were mediæval houses of timber and stone, with galleries and porches, sculptured and ornamental. In some cases the upper stories projected over the sidewalks so as to form a covered arcade. There was the remains of a massive Norman castle; and the fortifications of the town were still standing behind which the Huguenots successfully defended themselves in the old days.

As they walked along Jack asked:

"Why are modern houses and towns so different? They are all so straight and just-alike. The new streets and boulevards in Paris were all that way, and the houses were like walls, instead of being odd, with corners and things."

"Well, Jack, I'll tell you one possible reason. A house, or town is built first of all for protection; for protection from cold and storms, and from enemies.

Houses that are like walls keep the rain out better than houses with projections, where water would collect. But the main thing is, that in old days when your enemy was armed with a sword or a dirk, it was a good thing to be able to get up to him, protected by angles and corners. Now, in the days of cannon, what you want is a straight avenue down which you can sweep with your shell and balls. Woe to the enemy who approaches even from afar."

"Robert, what nonsense are you filling the boy's head with! You know its simply a matter of beauty and convenience as we moderns see it."

"There may be truth in what you say, Kate; nevertheless there is also in my explanation. Just see how admirably they could pour burning oil down from these overhanging windows on an approaching enemy."

"It is the age of the places that fills me with amazement and awe," said Mrs. Carter. "It is so different from reading history, one fairly sees it. I think I can easily picture the heroines of Dumas and Balzac looking out of these overhanging windows, or putting out one lily hand as a favorable sign to the eager and chivalrous gallant waiting below."

"Instead of pouring oil on them! But just wait till we get to Blois, Kate. That is what I am looking forward to. The room where Guise was murdered, the beautiful staircase of *François Premier,* those are worth seeing."

The train which was to take them to Le Mans was

already puffing in the station when the Carter family arrived. In the same compartment in which they seated themselves were two pleasant-looking young Frenchmen. Jack nudged his father and whispered to him that these were the men who had been so persistent in their questions at St. Michel. Mr. Carter only laughed.

"Traveling is for all, Jack. They won't eat us," he remarked.

The two men presently made an opportunity to speak to Mr. Carter. They finally asked him again if he had not lost something at Mont St. Michel.

"Why no," answered Mr. Carter, a little annoyed.

Suddenly Jack exclaimed:

"Daddy, the camera."

"*Qu'est-ce-qu'il dit*" (What does he say)? asked one of the Frenchmen.

"*Un kodak — nous avons perdu un kodak* (We have lost a kodak);" answered Mr. Carter.

"*A la bonne heure, un kodak. Est-ce que peut être celuici*" (Is it perhaps this one)? and the Frenchman opened his valise and drew out the lost camera.

"Oh, Monsieur," cried Jack, in absolute delight.

Mr. Carter thanked them, with almost equal enthusiasm and in a few moments the whole family were talking, half in French and half in English, as though they had known each other all their lives.

A great load seemed to have fallen from Jack's shoulders.

"I certainly am glad to get those films again," said

From the mainland to the island, where towered the battlemented abbey

Mr. Carter. "Think of all those pictures we took at Rheims at the aviation meet, Jack, let alone all the pictures I have taken in connection with business.

"Where did you find it, Monsieur?" They replied they had been walking on the sands of St. Michel and had discovered the kodak half buried. They had thought that it must belong to the children seen in the distance running to overtake their father. But Mr. Carter standing on the battlements would not be questioned.

As they had nothing else to do, being tourists of leisure, they had resolved to follow the American party. It seemed they were from the provinces and not acquainted with many Americans, and the Carters became an object of interest to them. The camera, they had decided, would prove an excuse for any seeming impertinence on their part.

Mr. Carter was immensely amused. He shook hands with them cordially, exchanged cards with them. So the journey passed pleasantly. It was late when the train puffed into Le Mans, with a ringing of bells and screeching of horns.

The little party, including the two Frenchmen, drove to a hotel on the principal square. There was some sort of circus going on in there and the square was filled with tents and people. There were plenty of side shows, trained birds and men selling candies, nuts and strings of cheap jewelry, while from the tents came an occasional weird yell, the voice of a caged lion or tiger.

All night the roaring of the animals kept them

awake, and Mr. and Mrs. Carter were much annoyed.

"The town will be full of all sorts of queer people, too," said Mrs. Carter. "We must watch the children and our purses."

They pushed their way through the square with some difficulty. Jack and Alice wanted to pause in front of the cages.

"Bob and Kitty would have liked this," said Jack.

"I am glad they are back in a fresh, clean place," answered his mother. "But it will be good to see them again."

"Their letters sound jolly enough," remarked Mr. Carter. "I fancy they'll be right sorry to leave. I will go up and get them in about a fortnight now, and then land you all safe in Touraine, while I do a little work to pay for our fun. Positively I shall be afraid to look Uncle Sam in the face when I get back. I have loafed so."

Le Mans proved to be an attractive mediæval town with a fine old cathedral and some old houses.

"It is an excellent opportunity to see the difference between the early Norman Romanesque arch and the Gothic," Mr. Carter explained.

"The nave, that is the body of the church, is early Norman Romanesque and dates from the twelfth century, while the choir is a fine example of Gothic and was built a century or so later."

Jack and Alice, now that their attention was called to it, easily saw the difference between the

rounded arch of the earlier builders, and the beautiful high vaulting of the Gothic.

"Cathedrals are almost all built in the shape of a cross, with the chapels built about the choir," said Mr. Carter. "There are twelve of these here besides the beautiful Lady Chapel, dedicated to Our Lady, as the men of old used to speak of the Virgin Mary. There are usually not so many chapels. The cross piece is called the transept. Here it is very high, you see, and very beautiful with its wonderful rose window."

"I like the whiteness of it," said Mrs. Carter. "It makes me think of the old white churches in New England. It seems so clean and bright compared to some of the other old ones."

"But, Mother," said Alice, "you don't like your old plain white wooden churches as much as these?"

"Indeed I do, Alice. When you grow up, perhaps you will understand why. Of course I love to go into these and see them, just as I love to go to a gallery or to the theater, but when I want to say my prayers, I like something simpler. And I like to think of the fine, simple, clean men who built those churches."

"O you old Puritan," laughed Mr. Carter. "There were some simple, devout men who built these cathedrals, too."

"Oh, I suppose so, but that isn't what cathedrals stand for in my mind, Robert."

"Well, honey, isn't it fine that you can have both kinds and nobody's going to string you up for sitting

through the service in your wooden New England churches?"

"Now, Robert, you are giving the children a false idea."

"Alice, am I giving you a false idea? What is your idea, anyway!"

Alice thought a minute.

"I don't know," she said. "You like cathedrals best and mother likes churches best 'cause she can say her prayers better in them. But I like to say mine best in bed."

"Alice, you know you ought not to," said Mrs. Carter. "I never let them, Robert. Now do be serious," for Mr. Carter was laughing heartily.

"Well, they are all kneeling here, anyway. There seems to be a service going on; let us join them."

While they had been talking the wooden chairs had been filling with people of all sorts — peasant women, nuns, with their sober dresses and large white bonnets — a few men — some simple-looking women, with black shawls over their heads.

The Carters sat down and waited. An acolyte lighted the candles on the altar and the full tones of the organ pealed through the arches. Red and white robed boys came in with their censers, followed by the choir and the priests.

The officiating priest had a fine voice and the French-Latin of the services as he intoned it was beautiful indeed. Alice and Jack watched with curious eyes the progress of the service and tried to do as they saw others do.

A really old town — Lannion

"I think I like it best in English, Daddy," whispered Jack, after the service was over.

"There are advantages, but remember that any Catholic, whether he be American, German, French or Hindu can hear and understand the same service, wherever he may be. That, too, is an advantage," answered his father.

Then the children went with Mr. Carter up into the galleries, while Mrs. Carter stayed below to study the stained glass and carvings.

The cathedral had no tower so the pleasure of the added climb was denied to the party. As they emerged from the dark stairs they ran almost into the arms of their two young French friends. So they all lunched together at the Boule d'Or in the little square that contains the market place. They sat, as usual, at little tables from which they could look off across the valley to the rolling country beyond. Indeed, the situation of Le Mans is one of its charms. The cathedral with its innumerable flying buttresses, as well as the houses, are built upon a hill which gives a feeling of watchfulness and security.

The invariable red wine, perfectly harmless and drunk in large quantities by men, women and children, seemed better, somehow, in this quiet spot, and the soft tone of the *manceaux* who sat at the other tables was a delight to hear. Afterwards they went to the museum.

Alice was much disappointed not to find the circus when they got back to the hotel. It had left that

afternoon, but Mr. Carter was jubilant, for he had discovered a kodak place where he could have his films developed.

They stayed in Le Mans for several days. Jack claimed because of the films, for it was not long before they had exhausted the town's resources. The young Frenchmen were a constant delight, however. They proved both witty and well-bred, and most anxious to hear about America. "Was it like Racine's 'Athalie'?" they asked. "And were there many Indians upon the streets? Where was Mr. Carter's gun, and did they know Miss Good?" This last puzzled Mr. Carter somewhat until they explained that it was the lady who had married the Count di Castiliani, now Marquise de Sargon.

"We have heard of her," replied Mr. Carter dryly.

He said afterwards to his wife:

"Kate, where did those boys get their ideas of America?"

"From the Paris *Herald* and from the classics, I imagine."

The last night of their stay in Le Mans, Mr. Carter came into the parlor with a roll of films and three dozen prints. They all proceeded to examine them.

Jack wanted to see the aviation pictures especially. Alice and Mrs. Carter wanted the Paris ones and the two Frenchmen and Mr. Carter were interested in all.

Jack became absorbed in one picture of Monsieur

Jean's Antoinette taken in front of the hangar. In the background were a small group of spectators. It was a very clear picture and the faces of the crowd were quite distinct. Jack saw beside the hangar the two men who had fought in Herr Berkmann's room. He was sure of it; the tall, fair man came out especially clear.

Jack asked his father's permission to keep the picture and as it was one of many, the consent was given.

"Take your beloved aeroplane, Jack — I really think the boy is a little crazy about Monsieur Jean."

It was precisely of Monsieur Jean that Jack was thinking. Would the picture be of use to him? That very night Jack wrote a letter inclosing the picture and asking for news. He told where they expected to be in Orleans, and hoped some day they might meet. The next day as they left Le Mans he mailed the note to Monsieur Jean.

CHAPTER X

ORLEANS — A FRENCH CHATEAU — MONSIEUR JEAN APPEARS

They found Orleans somewhat dull, as far as antiques were concerned, although a pleasant modern city. Jack and Alice were interested in the various reliques of Joan of Arc. Their father told them the story of the Wonderful Maid, who, inspired by heaven, came to the help of Orleans on her white horse.

"I believe they have religious processions here every year in May in her honor," he said.

Mr. Carter of course found almost every city interesting to him in a business way, but the cathedral was not an important one and there was little else to see except the museums. Jack discovered that there were soldiers, a regiment of artillery, and tried to inspire the rest of the party with some enthusiasm. But they were all glad to be joined by the two Frenchmen who had letters to a family, distant kinsmen, living in a neighboring chateau. This was about four miles away at the source of the Loiret, a little stream supposed to flow by subterranean channels into the Loire River. They obtained permission to bring their American friends and one pleasant afternoon the party drove out to the chateau to take *goûter* with the le Croix family.

They drove out in an auto, which Mr. Carter thought would be the most suitable way to visit a real chateau.

The park and gardens of the house were charmingly kept and the stream, the "Little Loire," most attractive. When they arrived at the chateau they found a cordial welcome from Madame le Croix, a fine-looking, gray-haired lady; her son, and his son and daughter. Monsieur le Croix was of an old Huguenot family and a courteous and handsome gentleman. He showed them the chateau with its reliques of former days, among which were some splendid portraits and a collection of old Huguenot arms and curiosities. There were beautiful parchment books, a rare copy of the Bible in the Vulgate which had belonged to a former le Croix. Mr. Carter was delighted. They spent some time in the library and finally François le Croix came to announce to them that his grandmother expected them to tea.

Mr. Carter and his host still lingered, but the two young Frenchmen and Jack and Alice gladly followed François down the stone staircase, into the great hall, and out to the garden at the back of the chateau. There under some beautiful trees sat Madame le Croix at her tea table, beside her was her granddaughter, Mademoiselle Louise, a pretty, black-eyed girl of eighteen.

Talking to them was no less a person than Herr Berkmann. Jack was amazed. So Herr Berkmann had left Paris; did Monsieur Jean know it? He

thought that that gentleman seemed almost as astonished as he and not pleasantly so. But the German recovered himself instantly and announced that he was visiting his fellow student at the Beaux Art, Monsieur François le Croix.

It was a beautiful afternoon in late September. The tea and *gâteaux* were delicious, Madame le Croix a cordial hostess, so the whole party were merry together. Jack could not help thinking of Monsieur Jean; he managed to enquire of Herr Berkmann how long he was to stay. The German seemed a little surprised, but answered a week or so. He was taking an enforced vacation, he said, on account of his health.

Mr. Carter, who had been watching pretty Mademoiselle Louise, decided in his own mind that health was not the only thing that was keeping Herr Berkmann at the chateau.

That evening Jack sent off a telegram to Monsieur Jean. It took some of his precious twenty francs, but it had to be done. He felt that Monsieur Jean should be notified.

Monsieur le Croix had found the acquaintance of Mr. Carter so much to his liking that he begged them all to stay on in Orleans for a day or two, in order to attend his daughter's fête, a birthday party to be held two days later.

Mr. and Mrs. Carter were delighted and Jack, too, was pleased. He hoped to hear from Monsieur Jean. Mr. Carter sought out a florist to make a bouquet for the young heroine of the day and Mrs.

Procession in honor of Joan of Arc

Carter arranged at the hotel to have Alice's best dress washed and ironed.

"I don't know that I approve of Alice's going to such a big party," she said doubtfully, but Mr. Carter reassured her.

"Of course it's exciting, but think what fun. She will be able to tell all the girls at home about it!" he said. "Think of a party in a real chateau."

They were just getting ready for supper. Jack, washed and combed, was sitting in the parlor reading when Monsieur Jean's card was brought to him.

He sprang up. "Monsieur Jean is downstairs and wants to see me," he called to his father and mother. Then he eagerly ran downstairs. Monsieur Jean was waiting in the office. He grasped Jack's hand.

"Bravo, *mon gars,*" he whispered. "We had just discovered his absence. We did not know where he was to be. You have helped us — indeed, yes. Now, do you think you could come with me, just for a little promenade? I have something important to say."

"Maybe, if you asked father," said Jack, hesitating.

"I will ask him. Can I go up?"

"They'll be down in a minute to supper. We haven't had supper," said Jack.

"I cannot wait, *mon gars.* It is now or never."

He scribbled on a card a request for permission to take Jack out for half an hour.

He sent the card upstairs by a bell boy. Then, without waiting for a reply, tucked Jack's arm under his and went out into the street.

"*Vite, vite,* Jack. I have just come by train, on the train was a man, big and blonde. He look like the picture you send. He got off here. I follow him to a *cabaret* where he stop for supper. I ran to you. You must tell me if he is the man. Perhaps he came to find Berkmann." Jack, all excitement, hurried along with Monsieur Jean.

Fortunately the *cabaret* was not far away. It was brightly lighted and from within came sounds of revelry. Jack and Monsieur Jean looked through the windows. There were a number of soldiers sitting at little tables, laughing, drinking, singing songs and having a jolly time of it. Among them was a tall, fair-haired man, in civilian's clothes.

"That's he, Monsieur Jean," whispered Jack.

"Bravo, we are good detectives, *hein,* Jack?"

Monsieur Jean squeezed the boy's arm.

"You are sure? Positive? We cannot make a mistake!"

"I am sure."

"*Bon;* now back to your hotel like lightning. For I must return. O Jacques, Jacques, bad things have to happen to me. I had made a model of an invention to use in my Antoinette, it has been stole right from my *atelier* where I was at work on it. There are some who suspect me, *me,* Jean Noir, of selling my plans to that German, betraying my country. I must recover it before it reaches Berkmann.

Perhaps this man has it. It is you who will save me, *n'est ce pas?* You have faith, Jack?"

"Oh, Monsieur Jean, of course I do. Didn't I see the men?"

"My commandant, he believe also. He gave me permission to seek, to restore my honor. But there are others; they are jealous. Jack, if I sent for you to help me, you would come?"

"I guess I would, any time, day or night."

"I will remember, *mon gars*. A thousand thanks for what you have done already. *Au revoir*. I feel that we shall meet soon, and Jack, you must not tell. It is our secret."

They shook hands at the hotel door and parted. The boy, full of excitement, ran into the dining-room where the rest of his family were almost through dinner. Mrs. Carter expressed some disapproval of Monsieur Jean as well as of Jack himself.

"Oh, Mother, it was such fun. I can't tell you. It's a secret of Monsieur Jean."

Nothing more was said about it then, but that evening Mr. Carter took the boy aside and questioned him.

"Where did Monsieur Jean take you? And why did he not wait for my consent?"

"Daddy, he was in a hurry. I can't tell you why. He told me not to. But, Daddy, he's square."

Mr. Carter looked his son in the eyes.

"Jack, you're young to have secrets from your father," he said. "I don't like it. And I don't know that I trust these French soldiers."

"Daddy, he's square, and you can trust him."

"I don't like your going off with him."

"There's nothing wrong in it. Truly, Father. Please believe me."

Mr. Carter stood looking at the boy.

"Jack, you mustn't go away without telling me. I do trust you, but you're only a boy. I must know what you are doing."

"This isn't my secret, Father. I can't tell you. But Monsieur Jean wouldn't take me anywhere wrong."

"Jack, there's lots of badness in the world that you don't know about. Some of these army fellows haven't the best of reputations. I have made some enquiries about Monsieur Jean and he seems to be all right. I suppose the time will be coming before I know it when you will have to judge for yourself, and choose your friends for yourself, and though that time hasn't come yet to my way of thinking, still you're old enough to understand some things.

"Now, about Monsieur Jean; if you promised not to tell where you went, I won't ask you, but I want you to say to him next time, and he won't think the worse of you, either, 'I can't go off on these adventures without telling my dad.' What do you think, Jack, couldn't you say that?"

"Daddy, I've promised to help him. He's been falsely accused of something."

"Well, help him all you want, but I want to know when you are going on these relief expeditions. A fellow who is worth his salt won't quarrel with you

for trusting your father. What I want you to think of is just this: when a fellow proposes something to you, stop for a minute and say to yourself, 'Would I be willing to share this with my father? And if not, is it because I am ashamed of it? If it's something I am ashamed to tell him, two to one it's something I'll be ashamed of having done.' Why, Jack, I was a boy myself not so long ago, and a handful, I'll have you understand. I think I can understand and sympathize with your plans and ambitions. And I want to try and help you to decide wisely in what you do, so that you will have as few regrets as possible for foolish things done. Jack, Jack, it's hard for a father to stand so far along the road and not really be able to help his son over the hard places he's been over himself. I can give you advice, but it is up to you whether you follow it or not."

He let his hand fall on the boy's shoulder and they stood for a moment looking out of the window.

The square was brilliantly lighted and people were gayly passing to and fro. "It's pretty, isn't it? But those lights aren't as healthy as the sunlight, Jack. Remember that what won't stand the light of day is usually tinsel, not gold."

CHAPTER XI

THE JOUR DE FÊTE

The *jour de fête* was a beautiful September day, an "Indian summer" day.

Early in the afternoon the little party drove out armed with many stiff French bouquets and French phrases of welcome and good will. At the chateau all was delightful confusion and merrymaking. There were counts and countesses, barons, baronesses and even a duke or two, who seemed to Alice and Jack much like other people. There were officers of artillery in beautiful uniforms; there were pretty girls a-plenty, shy and charming.

Tables were set on the lawn, and some gay young people were playing tennis on a grassy court. Herr Berkmann was conspicuously hovering about Mademoiselle Louise. But then so were a dozen or more young men, and the two Frenchmen who had come with the Carters, joined the throng of admirers.

There were a few younger children, too, who were standing quietly beside their parents. The boys all wore socks and knee breeches, even those who were slightly older than Jack, which filled that young man with scorn.

Mr. and Mrs. Carter were introduced to many

pleasant people and Alice followed her mother around, looking about her with wide-open eyes. She was thinking of all the people she must describe to chums at home.

Jack had wandered away in the crowd. He watched the tennis for a while and as he sat there a man in a chauffeur's costume approached him. It was Monsieur Jean.

He bent over the boy and whispered:

"Can you find for me Berkmann's room? I lost the other man. I think he has not been here. But he may be in the crowds to-day. I must go to Berkmann's room."

Jack sat for a moment, hesitating. He wondered what his father would say.

"He told me to judge for myself," thought the boy.

"Jack, help me," whispered Monsieur Jean. "I ask much of you, but it is only to regain what was stolen from me."

Jack got up and walked slowly toward the house. Monsieur Jean seemed to vanish.

The chateau had been thrown open to the visitors and Jack entered by a small door at the back.

There were people everywhere on the first floor, admiring the beautiful rooms and old furniture, the hall, the portraits and library of valuable books.

Jack walked calmly up the second flight of stairs and on the landing met one of the servants.

"Can you tell me where Monsieur Berkmann's room is?" he asked slowly, hoping she would under-

stand. "I have been sent for something. *Quel que chose, apporter, où est la chambre de Monsieur Berkmann?*"

The pretty maid pointed upward.

"I will show you," she answered in English.

And she escorted Jack up to the third story and to Herr Berkmann's room in the little tower.

He opened the door, after knocking and went in while the maid waited outside. He made a pretense at search, but as a matter of fact a strange noise right outside the window drew his attention.

The next moment a head looked in at him, the head of the ruddy-faced, fair-haired man.

Jack instantly left the room.

"The book was not there," he said to the maid. "Thank you for showing me the way." He ran down the stairs as fast as he could. He felt that he must see the outside of that turret room. Monsieur Jean was waiting for him near the back door. He was astonished at the boy's news, but on further examination the heavy ivy which covered the walls of the tower seemed a fairly good explanation. A short climb would not be very unsafe even for a heavy man and could hardly be visible from below.

"The man must have been concealed somewhere in some empty room," said Monsieur Jean. He thought a moment.

"Jack, I must go to that room and wait. I do not think that Berkmann has the plans yet."

"But Monsieur Jean, you will be one to their two. It is not right."

"*Peste,* they are Germans. I have my noiseless pistols and my knife. I must go back."

Jack described again the way to the room.

"Now, walk over to the chateau with me, for you are a guest and have *entrée,*" said Monsieur Jean.

The two went over to the back door and entered.

"There was no one on the third but the maid, you say, Jack?"

"No one, Monsieur Jean."

"And she, I trust, has gone. *Au revoir,* Jack."

"O, Monsieur Jean, I cannot leave you like this."

"Never fear for me. If you do not hear by to-morrow night, then send word to Alphonse Artois. He is in Orleans now, and can be reached at the prefecture. Do you remember Père Alphonse in Paris? They are the same. He is in the secret service. Go now, Jack, and wish me good luck."

They shook hands and Jack went out again while Monsieur Jean passed quietly through the crowd and up to the second story, which was almost deserted. He went in a self-assured manner, as though one of the servants of the house.

At the third story he hesitated, being somewhat confused by the winding of the stairs, but at last he came to the room that he felt sure was Berkmann's. He opened the door softly and entered. There was no one there. It was a charming room, old in fashion and handsomely furnished, and with windows at three sides, a turret room from which one could see over the country. There was a large clothespress

on one side and a chest on the other, under the windows. Heavy curtains hung at the opening to the windows, which were deep set.

A large four-poster bed with hangings, an oak table and two or three chairs completed the furniture.

It was a question of going under the bed or into the clothespress and Monsieur Jean chose the latter, for there he could stand upright and be less at a disadvantage. There were no papers on the table or in the drawer which Monsieur Jean examined hastily.

He crept to the window and looked out. He could see nothing suspicious. Over towards the city an aeroplane was lazily flying. It was a monoplane, and Monsieur Jean watched it a moment, kneeling in the recess of the window. Then he retired to the clothespress. There was an aviation field near Orleans, doubtless someone was practicing, and he thought no more of the matter.

CHAPTER XII

THE STRUGGLE IN HERR BERKMANN'S ROOM — THE ESCAPE

Meanwhile Jack joined his parents and Alice, who were sitting at a little table under the trees.

"Where have you been, Jack?" asked Alice.

"Inside the chateau. It certainly is a wonder. Such a place for hunting up secret passage ways! I am sure there is a secret room somewhere behind one of those portraits. I love the deep-set windows, too. I would like to sit and read in one of them."

"You are positively eloquent, Jack," laughed his mother.

They finished their refreshments and then decided to leave.

Jack tried to persuade them to stay, but his mother declared that they had remained long enough. They therefore went to make their adieux to their hostess, Madame le Croix, however, declared that they must return that evening.

"We cannot ask you to partake of my granddaughter's dinner, for that is one of a stated number of covers, but you must return to-night to witness the fireworks and the little play which is to be given afterwards."

"I wish we could," said Mrs. Carter, "but we

are leaving so early to-morrow morning that I think we must stay at the hotel to-night and pack."

"Oh, Daddy, couldn't you bring me? Or couldn't I come back with the two Frenchmen?" whispered Jack.

Monsieur le Croix urged that they reconsider and finally as they left called after them to be sure and come if they should change their minds.

Jack was in a state of subdued excitement as they drove home. Over the fields, towards the east, he watched the same aeroplane that Monsieur Jean had seen, flying to and fro like some mighty bird.

"I do want to see the fireworks, Daddy," he pleaded. He was filled with consternation at the thought of leaving the next morning without seeing Monsieur Jean. He felt as if he were a deserter, and all through dinner was wondering how he could send word of their departure. He was afraid to say too much about going lest his father suspect something to be on foot. Alice helped him by asking at dinner.

"Did you finally decide not to go to-night?"

"Why, of course we cannot go. I must pack and you two children are too young to go," said Mrs. Carter.

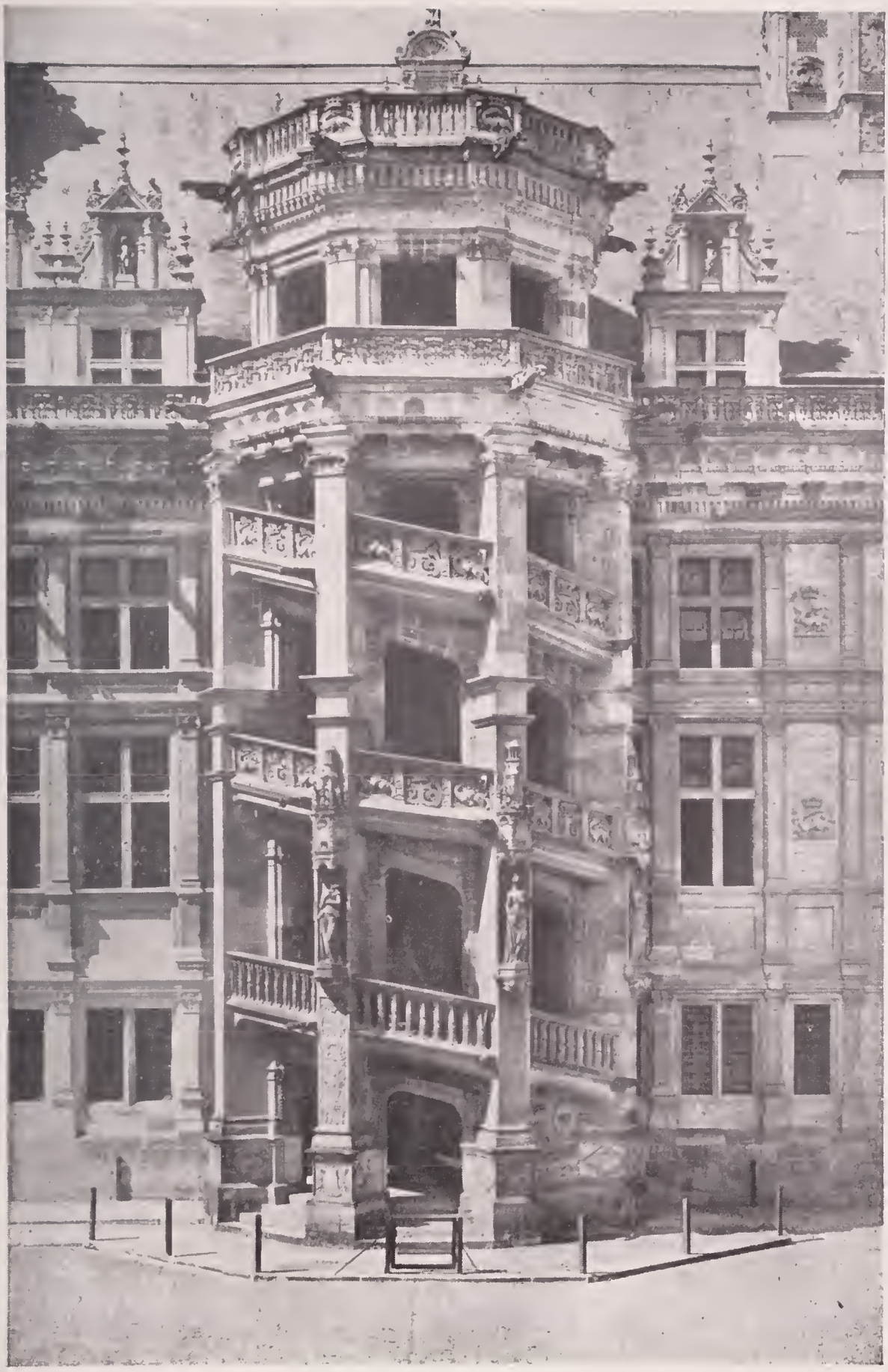
Afterwards Jack stayed in the reading-room.

Something seemed to be whispering in his ear:

"You cannot leave Monsieur Jean. He is in peril, in danger; you are the only one who knows."

Finally he shut up his book with a snap.

"I am going," he said to himself.



The winding staircase

At that moment his father came into the room.

"I am going out for a while, Jack," he said. "Your mother and Alice are packing. Don't stay up late."

"I'll try not to, Father," answered Jack with an excited laugh. "They'll think I went with Dad," he was thinking to himself.

He slipped out unnoticed. He had his money in his pocket.

It was a warm, dark night, no moon and the stars half hidden by a light haze.

He found a taxi in the square and ordered the chauffeur to drive to the Chateau le Croix "*vite, vite.*" He sat back in the cushioned seat, his heart beating madly.

Over the white road they sped, across the river, through the rolling country.

There were strange lights in the sky and over where the chateau lay, he could see bright rockets and bombs as they exploded in the darkness and scattered myriads of brilliants.

There were no delays and he reached his destination in about fifteen minutes. Bidding the chauffeur wait, he ran up the stairs, and then, before anyone had noticed him, slipped back into the bushes and round to the side.

There were crowds of people watching the beautiful fireworks, and a band added to the gayety of the scene. How was he to get up to Herr Berkmann's room? At that moment someone brushed passed him and a voice said in French to him:

"*Garçon, garçon.*"

Jack tried to hide himself.

Then a note and a piece of money were passed into his hand and the well-known accents of Herr Berkmann whispered,

"*Donnez ce lettre à Mademoiselle Louise un pen plus tard. Après une demie heure, comprennez vous?* (Give this letter to Mademoiselle Louise — a little later — in half an hour, do you understand?") Jack murmured:

"*Oui.*"

And Herr Berkmann, with a long, heavy coat and an automobile cap hastened away.

Where was Monsieur Jean? Evidently something had happened. Jack did not dare venture into the house. Could he climb up the vine? That was the question. It seemed the only thing to do. He slunk along the wall till he came to where the heavy vine began and twined up the tower to Herr Berkmann's room. It was a little away from the crowd.

Jack started up. He climbed slowly and carefully. It was no easy thing to do, and a slip would mean a bad fall, if not death.

He did not dare look down, but judged the height by the windows he passed, and at which he rested. Sometimes he looked into lighted rooms. Then there was a dark one and as he felt his way about, he found the end of a rope ladder.

His heart beat more quickly. He pulled at it and it held firm. So he climbed up. In some ways this was harder than the vine, but it was stronger.

It ended at Herr Berkmann's window. Cautiously he looked over the window sill. The room was lighted by a single candle. On the table in the center sat a man, with his back to the window. Jack could see a reflected light on the barrel of the pistol which he held in his hand. On a chair beyond him was Monsieur Jean, gagged and evidently bound. His eyes were closed, and a red-stained cloth was bound over his forehead.

Jack almost let go his hold. What could he do? He had no pistol, no knife, he was outside a closed window.

At that moment the man got off the table and came over to the window. Jack instantly clung to the ivy and ducked his head.

The man pushed open the window with a muttered: *"Brrr, das ist eine Hitze"* (what a heat).

He drew the heavy window curtains and went back into the room. Instantly Jack's head came up above the sill. He could look past the deep, dark recess of the window through the almost closed curtains and see the dim light beyond. That was all. It was too tantalizing. He cautiously climbed a little higher. Then slowly, with the help of the windows which swung wide open, he got into the recess of the window. There he sat for a moment resting. Then he peeked through the curtains.

The German had left the table and was sitting back in a large chair. His pistol was laid on the arm of it. Monsieur Jean had opened his eyes, and was looking about him as though in search of inspiration.

Jack softly stuck his face between the curtains and fixed his eyes on the prisoner. The next minute Monsieur Jean looked fixedly in his direction. Jack cautiously put his hand through the curtain, but instantly withdrew it.

After he felt a little rested, Jack knew something must be done. But what? He felt sure that he could never climb down again by the ivy. Any moment he might be discovered and he dared not think of the probably swift descent from the tower which would follow for him. He felt in his pockets and found a large jackknife. What if he should extinguish the light? Would that be a help or a hindrance? He might be able to help Monsieur Jean in the darkness and confusion. But if he should miss?

In another pocket he found the piece of money that Herr Berkmann had given him. The candlestick was a big, heavy one. It would take more than a coin, possibly more than a knife, to knock it over.

The German now arose from his chair, stretched, and walked towards the window, leaving his pistol on the chair arm.

There was no time to lose; an inspiration seemed to come to the boy, born of his deadly peril. He drew off his coat, and threw it straight at the candle, jumping into the room as he did so and ducking under the table.

With a muttered exclamation the German made a grab for the object which had so suddenly entered

the room. But the coat had fulfilled its mission; for a moment the room was dark, and in that moment Jack possessed himself of the pistol lying on the chair arm by the table.

Almost at the same instant the German himself had made a rush for it, but he was too late by a minute. Then he turned quickly to Monsieur Jean. But Jack had thought of that, too. He had sprung to his friend and with one hand in which was the open knife held back of him, and his other holding the pistol in front, he stood between Monsieur Jean and the German.

"I have your pistol," he said loudly.

It was black darkness in the room, which was a disadvantage to Jack. He realized at once that his only hope lay in firing at once.

He was used to a shotgun at home, so he knew how to handle firearms. He shot at the black shadow which loomed above him. There was no sound, only a flash of light from the pistol. He fired again at a slightly different angle. There was a rush towards him and he fired again. Something heavy fell.

Instantly he turned and with his knife cut the cords that bound Monsieur Jean's arms, then his legs.

Then something hit him in the legs and he tumbled. He dared not fire again but rolled over as fast as possible and got behind the table.

There was a scuffle and the sounds of a struggle. If only he could strike a light. It was so dark.

He ran to the window and threw aside the curtains. A sudden brilliant light came from somewhere into the room. In that instant of light Jack saw a box of matches and another candle on top of the dresser. Then all was dark again. But the boy sprang for the dresser and in a moment the room was lighted by the flickering candle.

Jack aimed his pistol at the big German who had turned to see the light. The pointed muzzle spoke more eloquently than words. The German's hands went up, and Monsieur Jean rushed over to the door and unlocked it.

Then he took the pistol from the boy and told him to run. Jack went out of the door like a flash. Monsieur Jean, key in one hand and pistol in the other, backed out of the door and locked it behind him. Then he threw his arms about Jack and kissed him on the cheeks.

"We must run. There is not a moment to lose," said Jack. And down they ran.

"The letter for Mademoiselle Louise. I had almost forgot it."

"What letter?" demanded Monsieur Jean.

"Herr Berkmann gave it to me. He did not recognize me."

"Give it to me."

"But, Monsieur Jean, it is for Mademoiselle Louise."

"You are right, *mon petit,* it is for a lady. We cannot open it. But doubtless there is nothing in it."

They had now reached the brightly lighted floors of the chateau.

Everyone was watching the play in the large hall.

"We cannot go down there," said Monsieur Jean, "looking as we do. We must go by the window."

He tried one of the doors which they were passing. It was unlocked and they opened it. It led into a hallway and to a flight of stairs.

Monsieur Jean and Jack ran swiftly down. They could hear voices, laughter and hand clapping. The stairs ended in a shut door. Beyond was silence. Monsieur Jean tried this door. It opened, and they found themselves in a sort of pantry, in which was a low, deep-set window. Monsieur Jean opened it, and they swung themselves down onto the ground at the back of the house.

"Now, Jack, carefully."

Without seeming to hurry too much they made their way to where Jack's taxi was still waiting at the front door.

"Now, *mon cher,* you have saved my life. I will never forget. I cannot thank you now as I should. For you must go home. What will your father say?"

"My letter for Mademoiselle Louise," interrupted Jack.

"Eh, the letter, well, I will give it to some man here. I fancy it is to make his adieux."

Monsieur Jean gave the letter to a chauffeur and presented him with Herr Berkmann's coin.

At that moment a sudden flash of light came from

the sky, a great search light, the same that had penetrated the tower room.

"What's that?" said Jack.

"*Ciel,* it is from an aeroplane. I have it, Jack, I have it. They have come for Berkmann and the other man. They ought to have Berkmann by this time. Jack, I must get them. Your auto quick, quick!"

They jumped into the waiting taxi.

"The aero field," commanded Monsieur Jean.

"*Vite, vite,*" and they were off at mad speed.

CHAPTER XIII

JACK TELLS HIS FATHER — BLOIS — THE STORY OF THE DUKE OF GUISE

A bell somewhere in the distance was striking ten. Jack leaned back in the auto. He was very tired.

Monsieur Jean seemed to have forgotten his wounded head. He was sitting with his face at the open window. Neither of them spoke till they reached the aviation field, outside of the city. There were soldiers there always on guard. Monsieur Jean had his papers to show, as an officer in the military aviation corps. A few moments of rapid explanation and the doors of one of the hangars were pushed back. Two of the men assisted Monsieur to roll out the heavy machine. It looked grim and mysterious in the darkness. Monsieur made a hasty but thorough examination of the machinery; the steering gear, the " wings," the search lights — all seemed in perfect order. Then he turned to Jack.

"*Mon cher,*" he said, " you must go home. I cannot tell you here what it is to feel for what you have done. Sometime I will tell."

" Oh, Monsieur Jean — can't I go — It would be so wonderful."

" No, no, *mon petit.* It is impossible. This is a man's work, and a Frenchman's — forgive me — you have done a man's work to-night, but what I

do now is for an aviator. I could not permit it. *Au revoir* — Sometime I will tell you of to-night's adventure."

He kissed Jack, according to the French custom.

The boy could not speak.

"*Au revoir,* Jack; wish me safety — And, Jack, I have not asked how you came for me, but you have been long away. You must tell Monsieur, your Father."

One of the soldiers cranked the machine and another mounted beside Monsieur Jean. The men were both armed, with guns as well as pistols.

There was a whirring sound and the beautiful, birdlike creature skimmed along the ground and then gradually rose.

Jack got into the waiting auto.

"Back to the hotel," he commanded wearily. He was almost ready to cry with disappointment. Swiftly they sped back to the town. Jack looked out of the open window and saw a sudden flash of brilliant light in the air — it was the farewell of Monsieur Jean. He reached the hotel and was just paying the taxi driver when his father walked up.

"Why, Jack, where have you been? Why aren't you in bed — What does this mean?"

"I'll tell you all about it, Father," answered Jack in a subdued voice.

They went into the reading-room and there Jack told his father of the whole adventure, from the beginning in Herr Berkmann's room at the Hotel des Saints Perès, up to the events of the evening.

Mr. Carter listened in amazement.

"Why, Jack, it doesn't seem possible — Oh, boy, boy, if you only were a man and could have gone to-night in the aeroplane. What an opportunity."

"But Monsieur Jean wouldn't let me."

"Of course he wouldn't; he showed some grains of common sense there. You two crazy children! Think of you climbing up that ivy! It doesn't seem possible."

"You see, I couldn't tell you before. And of course you won't tell now."

"On one condition, Jack," said his father sternly. "This must be the end for you. You must never meddle with this business again. Now to bed. You must be dead tired and we start early to-morrow. But what has your mother thought? She must have been terribly anxious."

"I bet she thought I went out with you," answered Jack.

"Well, we'll leave it that way."

The two went upstairs together. Jack was almost too tired to think and his father was too overwhelmed to speak. The more he thought the greater grew his astonishment.

He made no remarks when his wife remonstrated at Jack's staying up so late. He only said:

"It won't happen again. I have ordered the touring car for nine o'clock, dear, and it is time we all followed Alice's example and went to bed."

The next morning at nine o'clock the Carter family started in the big touring car. The chauffeur was

an independent fellow who had been recommended by Monsieur le Croix. His charge was moderate in the extreme but did not include his board or the price of gasoline. They found that the car and all cost them nearly one hundred francs in addition to their own board and lodgings.

"That seems like a great deal of money," said Alice thoughtfully. "Lots and lots more than the twenty francs you gave us to spend."

"It is more. How much is it in American money?"

"Nearly twenty dollars," gasped Jack.

They were out of the town now and moving easily over the smooth white road, between rows of straight, green poplars. Jack was inclined to be silent. He was thinking of Monsieur Jean and wondering how the adventure had turned out. But Alice made up for his silence by chatting away, asking innumerable questions. Mr. Carter gave orders that they were to proceed slowly so that they could see everything along the beautiful river of the Loire.

"Where does the river come from?" asked Alice.

"From the mountains in the southeastern part of France. The high parts of France are toward the east, and so the rivers rise there and flow towards the sea. The Seine comes from the Burgundian Mountains and flows to Paris, Rouen and the sea. The Loire is longer. It flows northwest till it reaches Orleans and then makes a big turn to the west."

The fields were full of vineyards, and the brown-

faced peasants were busily gathering the grapes. They passed through many small villages, with their small stone houses, and their high stone walls. Children, with bare feet or shod with *sabots* (wooden shoes) greeted them shyly in answer to Alice's friendly hand-waving.

"It is something like Holland. They all seem to dress in blue," remarked Alice.

"This is Meung, Kate," said Mr. Carter as they passed through the picturesque old town. "Don't you remember D'Artagnan's adventures with 'the man of Meung'?"

A few moments later they reached Beaugency, where François, the chauffeur, insisted on showing them all the objects of interest; an old town gate, a beautiful Gothic door, the chateau, and finally the long Gothic bridge over the Loire.

Ten miles more and they saw the town of Blois with the castle at the highest point, and the towers of the cathedral reaching up, in pious rivalry.

"This is what I came to France to see," said Mr. Carter, with a sigh of contentment.

"Take us to a good hotel, François. We will satisfy the craving of the flesh and then feast our spiritual man."

After *déjeuner,* with François as guide, they wandered through the queer old streets, with their frequent flights of stairs, and so, winding about, reached the entrance to the chateau.

Over the doorway is the statue of Louis XII, on horseback. His part of the chateau was built of

brick in simple Gothic style. François rang a bell and a woman appeared to take them about.

"Daddy, how bright and fresh all the colors are," said Jack. "It doesn't seem as though either the Revolutionists or the Germans could have been here! They seem to have destroyed things almost everywhere else."

"They were pretty destructive. As it happens, part of the chateau was used as a barracks. But it has been very thoroughly, and I think too theatrically, restored."

"What's that funny animal that was under the statue outside?" asked Alice.

"That's the porcupine, the badge of the Orleans family. Louis the XII was one of them. François Premier, who built the finest wing of the chateau, had a salamander for his sign — it's something like a lizard, you know."

"Francis First — didn't he say 'all is lost but honor' at some battle, and wasn't he the fellow who was knighted by Bayard?" asked Jack.

"Right you are, son. Been reading Henty lately?"

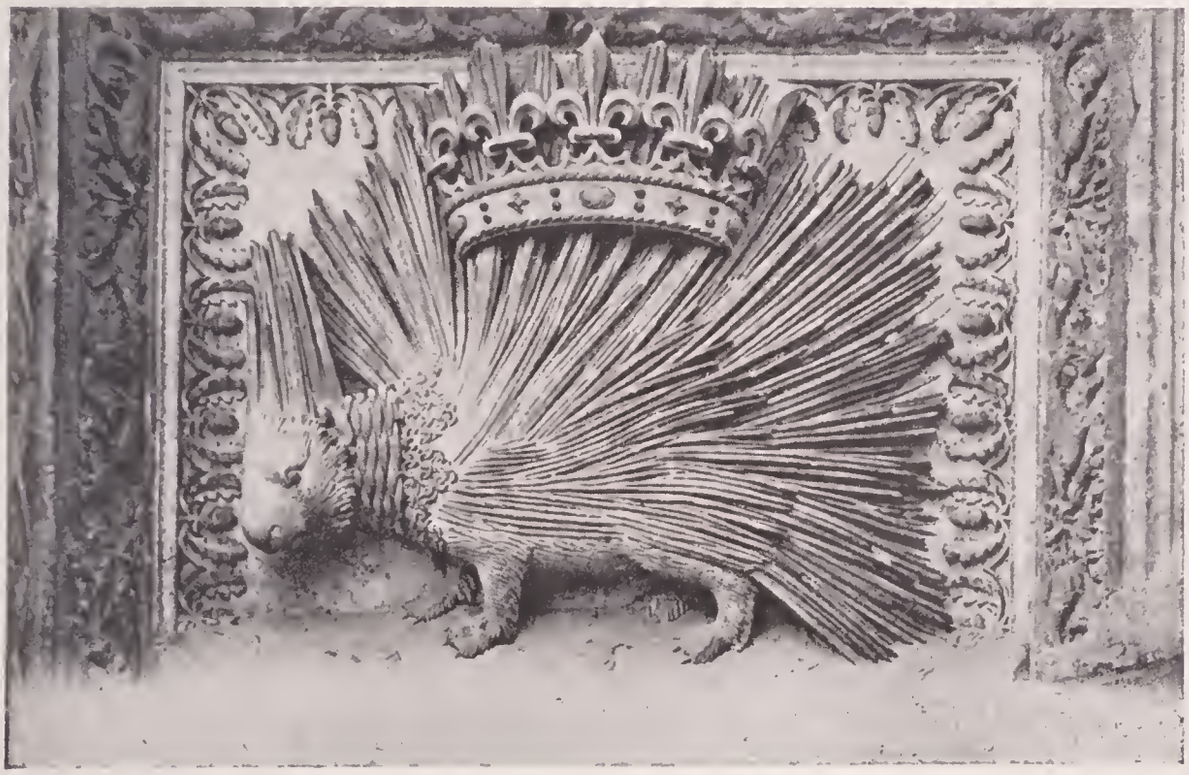
"Yes, Daddy. He really tells you lots of history."

"Oh, I suppose so."

"Robert," called Mrs. Carter, "do look at that wonderful staircase. That must be the one you came to see!"

"It is indeed, Kate. That, to me, is the most beautiful thing yet."

Tomb of the children of Charles VIII — Tours



Emblem of Louis XII — Castle of Blois
(The House of Orleans)

"It looks like the inside of a shell, Daddy," said Alice.

"It does indeed; the spiral of a shell. Your friend François Premier had this built. And I think we can forgive him a whole lot of things for that. It is enclosed in a sort of open tower. These great window like openings give us plenty of light by which to see the beautiful carvings of the sides and the ceiling. And did you notice the salamander in the decorations?"

"How worn the stairs are, Daddy."

"Can't you imagine all the beauties of the court of Francis and Henry marching up and down? What room is this, François, that one enters from the stairs? See the coat of arms with three fleur-de-lis over the chimney?"

"It is the council chamber," answered François. "Before this fireplace it is said that Henri de Guise was standing when his royal master sent for him, to go to his death."

"Oh, Daddy, tell us about it!" cried Alice.

"Well, I'll give you a little introduction and then François and the guide can fill up details. It was after the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve, and the wicked, half-crazy King Charles IX had died. Henry III was on the throne. And he seems to have been weak and worthless, too. The Duke of Guise was at the head of a powerful faction who were gradually undermining the king's power. They were known as the 'League' and they hated and scorned the king. So the king resolved that

the Duke must die. Now, François, tell us the rest."

François led them across the room to a secret staircase.

"There the murderers waited," he said. "Then they followed him through the little passage to the '*vieux cabinet*' which has since been destroyed. The king waited in his bedroom to see the affair to its end. The Duke had had many warnings, but only laughed at them. Notes had come to him in handkerchiefs and secret signals had been given. But it was to be, a man cannot escape his doom. So they fell upon him here in this little room. He dragged himself almost to the king's bed and as he lay there, the king struck him with his foot."

"Ugh — what a beast," said Jack.

"Guise was a beast, too, Jack, I am sorry to say. When that splendid old Huguenot, Coligni, was murdered in Paris, and thrown from the windows, Guise struck him with his foot. But it was a terrible death, that of Guise. They were awful times."

The guide took them into another room and showed them the secret cabinet of Catherine de Medici, the mother of Henry III.

"Their art was so beautiful and their morals were so hideous," said Mrs. Carter. "Blois seems a terrible place."

"That wasn't Henry of Navarre, was it, Daddy? You know the one in Macaulay's poem of 'Ivry.'"

"No, Jack. The struggle I have been telling you about was sometimes called the war of the three

Henrys — Henry of Guise, Henry of Navarre and Henry the king, his cousin. Henry of Navarre was a Huguenot, you know, and I suppose a pretty fine man for his times. Certainly he shone by comparison with his immediate predecessors. His mother was a wonderful woman, a really good woman. I am afraid she would not have approved of her son's turning Catholic to get the throne after the death of Henry III. You see, it was a different matter those days. When you had just seen thousands of Huguenots murdered by Catholics because of their religion, it really seemed poor taste, if not downright desertion, to leave that religion and go over to the Catholic side. It is reported that he said, ' Paris is well worth a Mass.' "

" I don't believe he had any religious convictions at all," said Mrs. Carter.

" Well, he was a great king, for France. Remember, beloved, that religion and politics were very much mixed in those days."

They left the chateau and walked to the gardens of the archbishopric, with its view of the river and the town.

" Why, Daddy, look at the Indian corn growing here, in the archbishop's garden," cried Jack.

" Well, well, so it is. Evidently it is regarded as a rarity."

" It is beautiful," said Mrs. Carter. " It seems late for it, though."

" Remember, it's been a warm summer. This may be fall corn, too. It does seem nice and homelike."

"I wonder if the bishop's children smoke corn silk," said Alice thoughtfully.

"Why, bishops don't have children. They don't marry when they're this kind, goosey," said Jack.

"Some bishops have children! They did in England and they do in America."

"Jack means Roman Catholics," said Mrs. Carter. "No Roman Catholic priest is allowed to marry."

"Sort of like monks, you mean?"

"Very much the same idea."

"I used to think nuns were Mrs. Monks when I was a little girl," remarked Alice thoughtfully.

"Where do we go to-morrow, Daddy?"

"To Chambord, and then to some of the smaller chateaux; Cheverny perhaps, Amboise, Chaumont, Chenonceaux and then to Tours. I am planning to get to Tours day after to-morrow. We really might as well take it easy as long as this warm weather lasts. Come, François, take us back to the hotel. All the beauties and horrors of the afternoon have given me an appetite."

CHAPTER XIV

TOURAINE — THE CHATEAUX COUNTRY

The next morning promptly at nine, the faithful François and his touring car appeared at the hotel door and they started for Chambord. Across the Loire, through level country they went till they reached what is known as the forest.

"It's just scrub oak," said Mrs. Carter, in considerable disappointment.

"Second growth, I suppose," said Mr. Carter. "There's the chateau. It looks more like the towers and chimneys of a small Oriental city than one chateau."

"Why do you suppose they built it out in this wilderness, Robert? It must have been very inaccessible."

"I don't suppose they had to send to Blois for their groceries, my dear," remarked Mr. Carter.

"How did they live then?"

"Well, I imagine they carried provisions with them. They never stayed long in one chateau. Perhaps they left when the food gave out. They may have lived on wild boar and venison. I am sure the courtyard seems built for a chicken run!"

"Daddy! Why it was always filled with men-at-arms."

"You are about right, Jack. Well, here we are. It certainly is a most impressive, but very homely affair."

They went in by a small door and were shown through empty room after room.

"It seems like a palace of the dead," said Mrs. Carter. The guide showed them up the famous great double staircase, with the steps running parallel but never meeting, except at the top and bottom.

This was a most delightful way to go!

They went out on the roof, with the numberless little turrets, towers and pinnacles, then down by the tower stairs. Everywhere was the salamander of Francis I, worked skillfully into the decoration.

"On the whole, it is pleasant to be back in the auto again and speeding back to Blois and places that at least look as if they were inhabited," said Mr. Carter.

François was a little disappointed at their lack of enthusiasm.

"You must picture it full of richly dressed people," he said. "You must imagine music, and dancing, hunting and gallantry."

"But I would not like to live there," insisted Alice.

"One does not *live* at court," declared François indignantly. Jack and Alice burst out laughing. And then with a bang and a jolt, the machine came to a standstill. François immediately sprang down and discovered that one of the back tires had burst.

"It will only be a short wait," he told them.

"Let's walk on and have François overtake us," suggested Jack. So they all started on.

It was delightful walking along the flat white road with its straight trees, like sentinels on either side. The peasants whom they met were friendly — and spoke with a purity of accent which delighted Mr. Carter. They passed through one little village where they were having some religious festival. The houses and churches were decorated with bright colored lanterns. The streets were full of peasants in their holiday clothes, and many priests walked among them, talking and laughing with their parishioners.

It was a gay scene; that afternoon, they were told, there was to be a procession.

The Carters went to the little inn and decided to lunch there. The long table was already laid for the many guests, bottles of red wine had been placed and great loaves of bread.

They sat down and their hostess bustled in and bade them welcome.

"It is all so friendly," said Mrs. Carter.

The words were scarcely out of her mouth when a strange voice called out, "*Va-t-en! Va-t-en*" (get out). They all jumped.

"Where did that come from?" asked Alice.

"*Mauvais subject*" (scamp), called the voice again.

Jack ran to the door, half expecting to find someone there. Alice ran to the window. But Mrs. Carter stooped under the table and said "Shoo."

Whereupon a large magpie hopped out and gravely remarked, "*Bonjour Messieurs.*"

"Well, that does beat anything," said Mr. Carter.

Shortly after lunch François arrived with the auto. He, too, had to be fed, so they sat in front of the inn for a while longer and made friends with some little girls in white who were to march in the procession.

It was with much regret that they left the pleasant village and departed on their way.

The chateau of Chaumont was their next objective point. As they crossed over the magnificent bridge which connects Chaumont and Onzain, they could look back and see Blois fading in the distance and the stone towers of the castle of Chaumont in front towering above them.

"The family were away," so they were told by the *concierge,* and visitors were permitted to enter.

Two great stone towers guard the entrance to the chateau, which seemed built for defense. But the interior court, instead of the usual quadrangle, had only three sides and commanded a wonderful view of the river.

This was their first really furnished chateau — and although Mr. Carter was a little skeptical of some of the furnishings, still, who could doubt that the bed in the state bedroom was really that of Catherine de Medici, and that the tapestries had hung on the wall ever since her day?

The bed of Catherine de Medici

"I don't believe the pitcher is old," said Alice. "It would have been broken long ago."

"How awfully uncomfortable the chairs look," said Jack.

"But what beautiful carving," said Mrs. Carter.

There was so much to be seen that it was quite late in the afternoon when they took the auto again.

"There really are beautiful trees here," said Mrs. Carter, as they drove slowly through the little park and down to the river again.

After another pleasant spin along the bank, they saw the towers of the chateau of Amboise high above the river.

"It was there," said François, turning around to address Mr. Carter, "that twelve hundred Huguenots were killed and thrown into the river by order of the Queen, Catherine de Medici."

"What a horrid person. I wouldn't have looked so cheerfully at her bed if I had known that," said Mrs. Carter.

"François, your head is full of horrors," said Mr. Carter. "Can't you tell us something pleasant?"

"The country and the little people are pleasant, Monsieur — but the nobility and the kings and queens were animals," answered François gravely.

"You are a good republican, I see. However did you get into this hot bed of royalists?"

"I had the misfortune to be born among them."

The next morning they climbed the steep hill up to the chateau. François immediately drew atten-

tion to the chapel of St. Hubert, built right at the edge of the battlements.

"Over the doorway is carved the legend of St. Hubert, who met with a miraculous stag, in the woods near here," said François. "Here, Madame, is something quaint and beautiful. There is no more charming carving in France, I am sure."

"It certainly is fine," said Mrs. Carter. They were shown the interior by a guardian and then proceeded to the chateau itself.

"The two staircases were built as roads," said François, "so that Monsignor could drive to his apartments, forsooth, without putting foot to the common ground."

"Mary, Queen of Scots, came here as a bride," said Mr. Carter, turning to Alice and Jack.

"Oh, Daddy, did she really?"

"I wonder if she really was as beautiful as they say?" asked Alice.

"People certainly were very enthusiastic about her," replied Mr. Carter.

They stood in the carved balcony, which overlooks the court of the chateau and the town below.

"I think I like Amboise," said Alice. "There are so many places to look off from. I think Mary, Queen of Scots, must have had a beautiful time here with her ladies."

"Is there a good inn here, François?" asked Mr. Carter, as they proceeded down the hill from the chateau.

"If Monsieur does not mind a late lunch, I think

Monsieur will prefer the inn at Chenonceaux. We can go there rapidly. It will not be so very late."

"All right, we will trust to you." So they passed rapidly through the pretty woods of Amboise to the little village on the Cher. There they found François' inn to be most comfortable.

"Isn't this the inn that Henry James described in his 'Little Tour in France'?" asked Mrs. Carter.

"Why, to be sure," answered her husband.

"That's a jolly book to read. We ought to have it now. And while you are at Tours you must read aloud to the children that book on 'Old Touraine' by some Englishman; Cook, I think his name is."

"Who lived here in this chateau that we're going to, Daddy?" asked Alice.

"Ladies chiefly, I think. Diane of Poitiers, our old friend Catherine de Medici and lots of other royal ladies. Chenonceaux didn't have so much history connected with it. The court seems to have come here for pleasure."

They were approaching the chateau.

"It's so little compared with some of the others," said Jack.

"Oh, Daddy! it goes over the river," cried Alice. "It's like a bridge."

"Yes, Mistress Alice, it is built on the remains of an old mill. It is a bridge."

"How pretty it must be looking from the windows," said Mrs. Carter.

They were admitted into the chateau and walked

about for some time. Alice wanted to go to "the bridge part."

"The floors are so beautifully polished, and the view so charming out of these windows, I don't wonder it was popular with the court ladies," said Mrs. Carter.

"I suppose they were going to build a pavilion to finish it off and then never had the time," remarked Mr. Carter, as they came to the end of the rooms over the river.

"It would have been too perfect, if it had been complete," said Mrs. Carter.

They wandered through the gardens and across the river and saw the best view of the chateau, as it stood, reflected in the quiet little river.

"It looks like fairyland," said Alice. "I wish I could have seen it when it was waked up, when the prince came and kissed the princess."

It was hard to tear themselves away, but finally François announced that the car was ready, so they bade farewell to Chenonceaux and were soon going slowly towards Tours.

"The nicest part of the trip is over, I fear," said Mr. Carter. "For I must get to work soon. This certainly has been a perfect time."

CHAPTER XV

TOURS — AN ADVENTURE IN THE CATHEDRAL — FRENCH SOLDIERS

As soon as they arrived at the Hotel l'Univers, in Tours, Jack ran to the desk to ask for mail. He was delighted to find a telegram, forwarded from Orleans and addressed to himself. He tore it open and found that it was from Monsieur Jean, in Paris.

"All well—My work achieved—More later, J. N."

Jack was wild with excitement. He wanted to know more. He tried to imagine the long chase through the night in the aeroplanes. O, if he could only have been there—if he could only go to Paris!

He took the telegram to his father, fairly dancing all the way.

"Oh, Daddy, I am crazy to hear what happened."

"Of course you are — so am I. We'll hear soon, I fancy. Perhaps we could ask Monsieur Jean down here."

"Why, Daddy, he's a soldier. He couldn't come visiting."

"True for you, my boy. Well, we certainly must hear about the end of your adventure—so cheer up."

"To-morrow, we will look up those letters of

introduction to people here in Tours," said Mr. Carter, later in the evening.

"The people I want to look up are those nice-sounding de Rivières in the chateau," said Mrs. Carter.

"All in good time, my dear. Let me see—Monsieur Joliffe is a retired gentleman of leisure."

"They will probably be very different from our Huguenot friends near Orleans, for I understand everyone is Catholic here in Tours."

"It's very strange that the La Croix family should have been in Orleans. It's supposed to be a Jesuit city. All this part of France is Catholic royalist. Well, they were charming."

"So were the de Tonvilles; they were Catholics."

"Surely. I don't believe their religion makes much difference. There are pleasant people in every party; religion and politics are so mixed that one cannot separate them apparently. If you're a Catholic you are anti-government and so on."

"Monsieur Jean's a Catholic and he's a soldier and loves the government," said Jack.

"Well, Jack, all generalities are false, even this one," answered his father.

The day after Mr. Carter sent his cards of introduction to Monsieur Joliffe. That gentleman called the same evening and courteously welcomed them to the town. He was a gentleman of the old school with whom it was a delight to talk. He offered to take them all to the cathedral the next afternoon, and bring them back for afternoon tea, *goûter* after-

Emblem of Francis I

wards. "Or perhaps your son would prefer the companionship of my young Charles. Perhaps he has seen enough cathedrals. The boys could play together and join us at *goûter*."

That seemed a pleasant arrangement; only poor Alice was aggrieved. She would have preferred staying with the boys. She made faces at Jack behind her hand and looked much disgusted.

"I am just as sick of cathedrals as Jack," she whispered to her mother.

"It would not be considered proper in France, my dear," whispered her mother in return. So Alice had to be content to accompany the others to the cathedral while Jack and Charles went off together. But she had a more interesting time than she had expected.

The cathedral with its great rose window and its beautiful high arches, impressed her in spite of herself. Monsieur Joliffe was a charming guide, and finally took them up the little narrow stairs, and through the gallery and out onto the roof. There they wandered among flying buttresses and gargoyles to the towers, which they climbed. Before them stretched the beautiful and fertile plains of Touraine.

"Look over there, Alice, that is Plessis where Louis XI had his castle. You remember him in Quentin Durward, I am sure, as well as in your history," said Mr. Carter.

"It ees not so magnifique to see now, it is a ruine entire." Monsieur Joliffe was trying English for

he feared that madame and mademoiselle did not understand French.

"And you understan', King Louis, he was not genereux in his ideas. His chateau was not grand like Chambord, or Blois."

"You remember those, Alice?" asked her mother.

"Yes, indeed. Only sometimes I get them mixed up."

Alice greatly admired some of the gargoyles, as they descended, and when the others reëntered the dark stairway in the body of the church, she lingered behind. Her mother did not discover her absence until they were part way down. Then she happened to call to her to be careful at a particularly dark turn. There was no answer. Instantly Mr. Carter and Monsieur Joliffe turned back to see what had become of her.

"There is really no danger," assured Monsieur Joliffe. "There is only one way. She must have lingered somewhere, and will very soon come to meet us."

Alice, meanwhile, could not find the little entrance door, but wandered about the gallery on the outside of the tower. It was very high up and she dared not look down for she felt giddy. At that moment she caught sight of a little wooden door. She had not remembered a door when they had come out, and felt that she must have forgotten. This one was rather hard to open, but she finally pushed it hard enough. It opened into a dark passage, just like the one by which they had come. She took a few steps

cautiously, and then came to another door. This she was sure could not be the right way. There had not been two doors. She turned to go back and found to her dismay that the door had blown shut behind her. She was very much frightened, and called for help, remembering all the dreadful stories she had ever read. Almost instantly the door in front was opened. Very little light came in, but enough so that she could dimly see a tall figure, who asked her in French who she was and what she did there. Her terror drove every word of French out of her mind; she hardly understood the question. The voice, however, was reassuring. In a few moments she plucked up a little courage, and murmured, "*Perdue, perdue*" (Lost, lost). She had a vague idea of having read a book of that name at school. Instantly their followed a torrent of French. But the voice was gentle, and sounded like that of an old man. She thought of another word.

"*Descendre*" (To go down), she murmured.

"*Vous voulez descendre?*" You wish to go down?)

This time the words were spoken more slowly; Alice's eyes, too, were becoming accustomed to the dim light. Her questioner no longer seemed like a ghost or a murderer, but was evidently an elderly priest. She began to enjoy the adventure and bravely tried to remember various French phrases.

"*Je suis Americaine*" (I am an American).

"*Mon père et Monsieur Joliffe et ma mère sont desçendus.*"

"J'ai voulu regarder les Bêtes, vous savez." (I wanted to look at the animals, you know.)

A few moments after, when her father and Monsieur Joliffe, now seriously alarmed, pushed open the wooden door of the belfry, they found Alice and her new friend chatting cheerfully together in very simple French.

There was considerable astonishment, mixed with joy. Alice really was glad to be found, although she had enjoyed her adventure, and her father was naturally much relieved. They bade farewell to the old priest, who, Monsieur Joliffe explained afterwards, was a little weak in the head, *"pas dangereux, vous savez, O, pas du tout!"* (Not dangerous you know, O, not at all.)

Mrs. Carter had grown very anxious and was somewhat inclined to scold Miss Alice.

"But, Kate, you ought to have heard the child talking French to the old fellow," said Mr. Carter. "It was wonderful. Alice will have to do all our talking now and be our guide."

Monsieur Joliffe also made some laughing remarks about "mademoiselle" and her excellent French. "It is the dark that brought her talents to light."

Then they came out again upon the street and hailed a passing carriage.

In a short time they were driven to the house of Monsieur Joliffe, a charming gray-stone building with a little garden and trees in a central court. The *concierge* on the ground floor admitted them

and introduced them into the salon. Here they were met by Madame Joliffe.

A neat French servant immediately brought in the tea and delicious hot toast and cakes. Now Alice became a heroine at once, for Monsieur Joliffe insisted on telling the whole story with many little embellishments.

Fortunately Alice did not quite understand it all, but she did understand Madame Joliffe's consternation.

"*Dîtes donc, quelle enfant!*"

At that moment Jack came in with the son of the house, a tall, dark-haired French boy of twelve, clad in a sailor blouse, knee breeches and socks. He spoke some broken English, and evidently wanted to talk. But being very well-mannered he kept quiet while with his parents and their guests, until Madame Joliffe bade the children take their cakes outside. So they went out into the garden.

Of course Alice wanted to tell Jack all about her adventure. Charles seemed quite astonished at her daring to get lost.

"No French young lady would not to dare," he said.

"Why not?" asked Alice, "I couldn't help it."

Charles shrugged his shoulders. "It is not to do."

Alice laughed, "You do talk awfully funny English."

"*Et bien,* speak French," he replied in French, "and we will see."

Alice, encouraged by her conversation in the tower, was about to launch forth, when the children were called in by Mr. Carter's resonant voice. "It is time to go home."

They all bade each other farewell, and settled upon the next day for an excursion to Chinon.

After supper, as the Carters were sitting in their room, Jack's mother asked him how he had enjoyed the afternoon with Charles. Mr. Carter was busy studying time-tables, for he was to leave in two days for Paris.

"Why, Mother, I can't understand him, he's not a bit like the boys at home. You ought to have heard the way he talked about his teacher, Professor Planché. Why, you'd think he were the worst sort of a beast, not the kind of man you'd allow in the house, just because he isn't a Catholic."

"Well, Jack," said his father, "I have heard something of the sort in a political campaign at home."

"But, Daddy, Charles is such a kid. What business has he to talk that way, anyway? I'd just like to hear one of us do it. I know you'd jump on us all right."

"Probably, my son, though I think you would do the jumping. I don't know what your young friend said, but I suppose his father is one of the Catholic Royalist Party, and longs for the good old days of kings and parochial schools. It is astonishing, Kate," added Mr. Carter, turning to his wife, "to hear some of these old fellows talk about the gov-

ernment and governmental schools. It's like being back in the middle ages."

"Before the flood, and before the independence of Texas, Daddy," said Jack with a grin.

"Don't be saucy, young man. And as far as Monsieur Charles is concerned, he's probably better off as he is. You see, Jack, the government considered that the Catholic schools and convents should be treated just like other schools, that they should acknowledge the government and in short, behave themselves as rational and good citizens. The bishops were most of them quite ready to permit this, but the Pope vetoed the bill, so the convents and schools were closed by the government. Of course there was suffering among the nuns and priests, but what could you expect? A priest and nun must obey the laws or suffer for it. I suppose there is some satisfaction in being a martyr."

"And they were real martyrs, too, Robert. You read 'L'Isoleé,' didn't you? No? well don't, then. It's too sad. It is the story of a nun cast out of her convent, homeless, friendless, knowing nothing of the world, and inexpressibly lonely. Oh, the government has many martyrs to answer for."

"Steady there, Kate. There undoubtedly were martyrs, martyrs to obedience, martyrs to an idea, but the government can hardly be held responsible. It could not prevent the isolation of your poor little nun, any more than it could those astonishing scenes in some of the churches in Paris, in many of the churches in the provinces, where the young royalist

and Catholic sympathizers barricaded doors and windows as if they expected another reign of terror. It is mediæval, the whole attitude of the Catholic Royalist Party. Think of such scenes taking place in the last ten years."

"We don't have that sort of fuss, Dad."

"No, we have our own kind. I am afraid religion has not much to do with it. Ours is just plain lawlessness. But don't be scornful of the French, my boy, they are a wonderful people. Yesterday you were laughing at the undersized youngsters you saw marching through the streets, and calling themselves soldiers. You must remember that the big men were killed off in the fierce wars of the last century. But these boys will fight all right when they have to; only give them half a chance and they will go through Europe. But it will not be fellows like your friend Charles. Rather will it be men like Monsieur Jean."

"What can you expect from a boy who never even was called Charlie?" said Alice coming into the room at that moment.

"I think nicknames are a great mistake, my dear," said her mother. "I wish we had a little more formality in our homes."

"Now come, Kate, you wouldn't want to call 'Jack' 'John Alden,'" said Mr. Carter gravely. There was a general laugh.

"Who wants to go out and see the boys march? I heard a bugle a moment ago down by the river; come on everybody."

"Hurrah!"

There was a general scramble for hats and the four hurried down the stairs, and out into the gray old street.

The trilling note of the bugle called them down the narrow side streets to the broad avenue on the river bank. There they found a red-legged company of infantry marching along with the tri-color waving over their heads.

"It's the Marseillaise, Robert," Mrs. Carter said, taking her husband's arm. "I can never hear it without thrilling."

"'*Allons enfants de la Patrie.*' Come on, we will follow them a bit," was his reply.

The four joined a small crowd of boys and men watching the troops. They seemed tired and hot and did not march in the best of order. Their baggy red trousers and dirty jackets and small fatigue hats did not add to their appearance.

Mr. Carter said, "I wonder where they've been. I'm going to ask this young officer who is riding slowly in front of us."

"But, Daddy, wouldn't he think it queer, he doesn't know you?" asked Alice.

"I don't believe he will object. You might ask him, Jack."

"I can't talk French," answered that young man with disgust.

"Jack can only say, *Merci,* and *avez vous un gigot de mouton* and *gâteaux,*" said Alice scornfully.

"Well, it's a shame, Kate! Here those two kids

have had a French governess and have been to an expensive school and they can't even say 'No' to a beggar, and have him understand. I think we will have to try a public school. I always said —"

"But, Daddy," interrupted Jack, "the public schools don't have French till the High School grade. And anyway, talking here is so different from reading in school."

"And I can talk French," added Alice.

"Humph, well, I will ask him myself."

Mr. Carter approached the officer and in excellent French asked him where the troops had been. Alice followed him closely, for to tell the truth, the young officer in his trim uniform, gallantly riding a spirited horse, was handsome to behold.

"They have been marching all day, field practice," was the answer.

"Ah, you are getting ready to carry the war into Africa," said Mr. Carter, half laughing. But there was no laugh on the face of the young officer as he replied:

"Wherever we are called, Monsieur; Africa, Lorraine, it is all one to us."

"So long as the enemy remains the same?"

"France has only one real enemy," was the answer.

"Your boys look very young, Monsieur," said Mr. Carter thoughtfully after a moment.

"The army is not their profession; in France every boy must learn to defend his country, but after serving his time, he is ready to take up a peaceful

occupation. We are not a nation of fighters, we love peace. But we must be ready, every one of us to defend our country. I have the honor to wish you good evening, Monsieur."

The troops marched on, and when they had passed, the four wandered along the river bank — so quiet, so peaceful.

"Why should there be a war, Father," asked Jack.

"There should not be, but alas! there might be."

"I don't believe those boys could do much," said Alice. "Why, our West Point men could beat them anywhere."

"Well, I'm not saying they couldn't. I'm too good a Texan not to back the U. S. A. But those boys can fight, their fathers have proved it, even if their line of march is a bit straggling. You will have to go to Berlin to see real marching. Even West Point Cadets, men, as you call them, can learn something there."

"But it's not all marching, Daddy."

"What isn't all marching, Jack?"

"Well, war, and being a soldier, and fighting for one's country and all that."

Mrs. Carter laughed. "That's just what your father has been saying, children."

"And now Jack has discovered it all by himself," teased Alice.

"General Sherman said war was very different from marching. He said it was —"

"Now, Robert," remonstrated Mrs. Carter.

"Well, come along and let's have some *gâteaux* at that *pâtisserie* on the Rue Royal."

"Oh, Daddy, hurrah!"

"And after that bed."

"Oh, it's awfully early."

"You haven't eaten your *gâteaux* yet; come, don't borrow troubles, they will arrive soon enough."

They turned down some little quiet streets, where it was darker than on the river bank, and into the lane that led to the great cathedral, looming vast in the twilight. Only the beautiful towers and rose window were bright with the last rays of the setting sun.

They passed some black-robed priests, hurrying mysteriously into the cathedral close.

"I feel as if I were a character in Dumas, Le Brave Bussy, or the fellow in La Reine Margot; what was his name, Kate? Jack, don't you remember?"

"I never read it, Daddy."

"I suppose not. I suppose Colomba, and Cinq Mars are your highest hopes at present. Just you wait; you don't like French, but there are more thrillers in Dumas than you dream of."

"Robert, what are you saying? Why of course they would not be allowed to read Dumas."

"I've read some of the 'Three Musketeers,'" whispered Alice to Jack. "Fanny has it in English at home."

"What are you youngsters whispering? Did you

say you had read some of Dumas, Alice? Did you like it?"

"Why, yes, but I thought it was queerly written."

"Well, Kate! Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings! Listen to me, Miss Alice, the cheap English editions of Dumas are hardly worth reading by any one. But when you learn French enough, I will present you with all the best of his novels in French, and I will promise you a treat. Kate, just think of reading La Reine Margot, and La Dame de Monsereau for the first time.

'Devot et tendre aussi,
C'est le brave Bussy.'

Here we are, the Rue Royal. Now for the *pâtisserie.*"

The street was brightly lighted, and well filled with people strolling about in the cool of the evening.

"This is more like America, Father," said Alice, "with all the people, and shops and trolleys. The houses are all new, too."

"Haven't you learned to say *tramvays,* my dear?" laughed Mr. Carter. "This is a nice-looking shop. I like the little tables outside. Come, let's sit down. Perhaps they will even have *des glaces.*"

The small, fat proprietor, enveloped in a large white apron, came out, and affably bade them welcome.

"Now, Jack, ask for your cakes and ices, boy."

"Daddy, I can't."

"Don't be silly."

"I'll do it, Father," Alice volunteered.

"Monsieur, *est-ce que vous avez des gâteaux et des glaces?*" (Have you cakes and ices?)

"*Mais oui,* Mademoiselle," and he rattled off some rapid French sentences. that even Mr. Carter found difficult to follow. With a lordly air, however, he bade the proprietor bring them "*quatre glaces et des gâteaux — Babas — Brioches — Napoléons — tout-ce-que vous avez.*"

The proprietor disappeared, but presently returned with four miniature sherry glasses, in each of which was a teaspoonful of water ice, and a huge tray full of pastry cakes of all sorts and descriptions.

"Monsieur is satisfied?"

"More than satisfied; the difficulty is in choosing among such delicacies."

The proprietor beamed and in due time the cakes were chosen. Jack always chose solid ones, while Alice liked the ones which, as she said, "were full of squush."

They were all delightfully tired when they returned to the Hotel l'Univers and the children, in spite of their former remonstrances, were not sorry to go to bed.

"We must be up early to-morrow to start for Chinon," called Mr. Carter. That was the last that Alice heard as she dropped to sleep.

CHAPTER XVI

MR. CARTER AND JACK GO TO PARIS — LANGEAIS — ALICE AND MRS. CARTER VISIT A BARONESS

But the next morning Mr. Carter received two telegrams which interrupted their plans for the day. One was from Mers.

"We are frozen, can you not come for us?

"EMILY FORD."

The other was from a business friend in Paris asking for an appointment. Mr. Carter instantly sent a return telegram to Miss Ford:

"Be ready to leave Mers to-morrow at noon.

"ROBERT CARTER."

and made his business appointment for the evening of the next day.

"Now, Jack, you have two hours to pack," said his father.

"Why, Daddy, where am I going?"

"You are going back to Paris with me. Your mother and I have talked it over and have decided to send you to an English school near Paris; the same that Roger de Tonville goes to. You are losing too much of your school time."

Jack stared in amazement. But he thought in-

stantly that in Paris he would be able to see Monsieur Jean and his face grew radiant.

"O, Daddy, what fun. Hurrah! Alice! I am to go back to Paris to school — Jimminy! but that's great." He rushed upstairs to do his packing.

"Kate, our birds are getting ready to fly," said Mr. Carter, half sadly. "They seem to like it, too. I suppose Alice will be getting married before we know it."

"Robert — how silly — she's only ten. I must help Jack and you with your packing now, so I haven't time for such nonsense. Jack hasn't many clothes, but I suppose Mademoiselle can get them in Paris."

"Not on your life, Kate. I'll get 'em myself. She'd have him wearing kilts and sailor suits! But I fancy I can find an English or American store somewhere."

The packing was soon done and then a lunch was brought and then came the farewells. Mrs. Carter had tears in her eyes as she bade good-by to her boy.

"You won't be home till Christmas," she said.

"Oh, Jack — be a good boy and don't get homesick and remember to write me often and don't forget to change your underclothes twice a week."

Alice was really crying.

"Jack, what will I do alone here?" she said.

"I'll be back before you know it," said Jack.

He was getting a bit teary himself and wanted to be off without "making a girl of himself."

"Good-by, Mother. I won't forget. Good-by, Alice. Write me lots and I'll tell you all the things that I can."

Mrs. Carter whispered some last words to her husband. "If the school doesn't seem all right you will bring him back, won't you?" were her parting words.

"Cheer up, Kate darling. I'll be back with the babies soon, and you and Alice must be brave and jolly and have a good time. The Joliffes will be nice to you, I'm sure, and you must send your letters to the de Rivières at once."

"How soon will you be back?"

"Probably in ten days. It's my last chance at some men I want to see in Paris. You see I've got to do some business now. Perhaps I will ship Mademoiselle and babies down to you. I can send them from Paris on a through train. Could you stand the added responsibility alone? I hate to leave you here to get settled alone in the hotel. It's forlorn. Perhaps the Joliffes could find lodgings for you. We must be off now. Good-by, honey, and don't get too blue, all alone in a strange land. And good-by, Alice, take good care of your mother."

Mr. Carter and Jack jumped into the hotel omnibus, with their bags. Jack's trunk was already on top. They were off!

Mrs. Carter and Alice watched them go and then went back into the hotel, where they found Madame Joliffe. It was a pleasant surprise. Of course on receiving the word from Mers, Mr. Carter had tele-

phoned at once to the Joliffes, breaking the engagement to go to Chinon.

"It certainly was sweet of you to come right over to see us, Madame," said Mrs. Carter.

"I thought I might help you," answered that lady. She and Mrs. Carter talked to each other, each in her own language. Mrs. Carter could understand French fairly well, but she acknowledged with shame that she could not speak it.

"My tongue is too accustomed to German," she said. "When we go there, I will be the interpreter."

Madame Joliffe understood English but never, never, never could she master that outrageous language, she had declared to her husband.

Mrs. Carter explained their change of plans and asked Madame Joliffe's advice as to lodgings.

"How long will you be here?" asked Madame.

"That I cannot tell, until we hear from Monsieur — but we hate hotels."

"Of course. Ah, if only that miserable goverment had left us our beloved Augustine Convent! They would have made you so comfortable, the dear sisters!"

"Why, Mother, do nuns take boarders?" asked Alice.

"These did, I fancy. I wish they were here, Madame."

"We will see what we can do. In the meanwhile you and the little one must have *déjeuner* with me. We can talk things over better at home. And why

can we not go to one of the chateaux to-morrow? We do not need to wait for your husband. Monsieur Joliffe will take us."

Mrs. Carter and Alice were only too happy to lunch with the Joliffes. Monsieur was also at home. Mrs. Carter asked him about presenting her letter to Madame de Rivière.

It seemed that the de Rivières and the Joliffes were acquainted. "They are charming, delightful," said Monsieur. "Madame la Baronne is a widow who lives with her brother and her two daughters. They are of the old nobility. They have such a charming chateau, not too old but furnished *comme il faut.*"

"Are they at home now?" asked Mrs. Carter.

"Yes, indeed — they do not go to Paris until the end of November. One of the young ladies is at school in Paris but the other is still with her mother. O, they are charming little ladies."

"O, Mother," whispered Alice, "it would be fine to see a girl of my age."

After talking the matter over with Madame Joliffe, Mrs. Carter decided to remain with Alice at the hotel until they should hear from Mr. Carter. Madame, however, gave them little hope of finding an apartment for so short a time as they would require.

"The only thing that I know of," she said, "belongs to a friend of mine. She is planning to go for one of the winter months to Paris, but I do not know when. She usually closes her apartment for

that month. It might be that we could persuade her to go in November."

"That would be fine for us, but I do not like the idea of turning your friend out."

"Let us wait and see. Meanwhile if you are not tired of seeing chateaux will you not come with us to Langeais to-morrow? Monsieur Joliffe has entrée there, for Monsieur S. is a dear friend of ours. He is away, alas! but the domestics will show us about."

Mrs. Carter and Alice accepted with pleasure.

"Will you not make yourselves at home here, Madame Carter? The salon is more comfortable, I am sure, than your hotel rooms, and you can read or sew while the little one plays in the garden."

Mrs. Carter thanked them most gratefully and said that they would surely come some other day. To-day they would take a drive out to the old ruins of Marmoutier and around in the vicinity and do some shopping.

"To-morrow, then, you will take *déjeuner* with us and we will go out to Langeais."

And so it was decided.

The next morning came a telegram from Mr. Carter.

"Mademoiselle has pneumonia — cannot travel. Stay on with twins at Saints Pères. The rest well. Will write."

"I think we ought to go back to Paris," said Mrs. Carter. "The children cannot stay there alone with your father. Perhaps Miss Ford will bring them

on. I wish I had not sent my letter to Madame de Rivière."

"Daddy said he'd write," said Alice.

"Well, I will be glad to hear. I hope Mademoiselle is not very ill."

They went out shopping that morning. There did not seem to be many things to buy, but Mrs. Carter wanted some photographs for her journal and Alice had lost her best gloves in the carriage the day before.

Alice had become quite a good French scholar and enjoyed talking to the shopkeepers. They stopped at the cathedral on the way back to the hotel; Mrs. Carter liked to sit and think in the dim quiet aisles. Alice would leave her sitting and wander about looking at the carvings and stained glass windows. She had a very friendly feeling towards the cathedral, ever since she had been lost there. She wondered if her friend, the priest, still lived up in the tower. She discovered the two little marble children of Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany lying side by side, in their queer stiff clothes, with the kneeling angels and dolphins. She wanted to know more about them, but her mother could not tell her. Indeed, Mrs. Carter thought that they might be two boys. But Alice was sure they were a boy and a girl. So she pictured little Anne and Charles (so she named them) playing together. She wasn't sure just how a prince and princess would amuse themselves, but she hoped the dolphins were real, and nice to play with.

The chateau of Langeais was but a short ride in the train from Tours. The little party, consisting of Monsieur and Madame Joliffe, Mrs. Carter and Alice, arrived shortly before three. The houses of the little village clustered at the foot of the chateau, and pleasant, sunburned peasant faces looked out upon the strangers as they passed.

Langeais was more fortified than had been Chenonceaux and Cheverny. Monsieur Joliffe led them around the gardens and finally into the charming little enclosed court, where a servant bade them go about freely. She knew Monsieur Joliffe and was sure her master would be glad to have them feel perfectly at home.

The great hall was most impressive.

"This is where Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany were married," said Madame Joliffe.

"O, Mother, they were the father and mother of the little marble children," exclaimed Alice.

The little spiral staircases which led to the upper floors were enclosed in three corner towers. Around the battlements one could walk in an enclosed passage and look out upon the distant country beyond the river.

It was easier to believe that real people had lived here, and children, little Anne and Charles; the rooms were furnished as they might have been in the old days, with quaint old tables and chairs. Rich tapestries hung on the stone walls and old rugs and skins were on the floors. The windows were narrow and deep-set.

They wandered about for several hours and then decided to drive back to Tours, *en voiture*. They found no very comfortable carriage and Monsieur Joliffe was somewhat apologetic.

"There is no train until very late. Madame Joliffe and I enjoy such rides, but you, Madame, may feel ill at ease."

Mrs. Carter and Alice were overjoyed at the curious old carts in which they were forced to sit, and the blue-clad peasants who drove them.

"We can get out before we reach the city and ride on the *tramvay*," added Monsieur Joliffe; to which Mrs. Carter acquiesced.

The drive back over the long white road, with its straight rows of poplars and the blue, peaceful river at their right proved delightful, although the springs of the carts left something to be desired. Once they went through a little side road between gray walls. In the fields were many women at work and they met an old peasant woman bringing home her sheep. She was spinning wool as she went along.

"*Voilà, petite*," said Madame to Alice. "She takes the wool from her sheep, separates it and spins it and makes it into stockings, all as she goes from day to day watching her flock."

Before they reached Tours, they descended from their high seats and paid the good-natured driver. Alice hated the thought of taking a "stupid old tram," but sat back with a sigh, nevertheless, in the comfortable seat of the car.

Madame tried to persuade them to return to dinner, but Mrs. Carter wanted to go to the hotel so that she might not miss any word from her husband.

"We may be called to Paris, you see, and must be ready," she explained. They found a long letter from Mr. Carter waiting for them. He wrote that Mademoiselle was much better — might be able to travel in a week. Meanwhile Miss Ford had been called back to England by the death of a relative and he had engaged an Irish nurse to see to the twins. Madame de Tonville had found her, indeed, had known about her for some years. She was not too young, jolly and obliging, and very anxious to be with an American family. Madame de Tonville had been most kind. A trained nurse was caring for Mademoiselle and the twins were well and radiant. Bob was insisting on wearing socks but stockings should be immediately ordered.

"And now, my dears, I have a piece of delightful news for you. I met a Monsieur le Doux here at Monsieur de Tonville's and found him most courteous and hospitable. He turned out to be the brother of Madame de Rivière, to whom you have sent your letters. As soon as he heard of your lonesome plight in Tours, he wrote to his sister and within a few days she will call to invite you and Alice to visit her at the chateau.

"Now are you not glad that the twins and I are in Paris, for they surely could not have asked the whole family. You will have a most interesting

"As she goes from day to day watching her flock"

and pleasant time. Madame is alone now, with one little girl about Alice's age. They have a real farm beside the chateau, which latter is not too old to be comfortable."

Alice and Mrs. Carter, too, were all excitement at the news.

"Oh, Mother, how soon do you suppose she will come? Will she really ask us?"

"I do hope your father didn't suggest the thing himself," said Mrs. Carter. "He sometimes forgets that every one is not given to Texan hospitality. But it certainly will be pleasant. After all, suppose he did suggest it? He was a dear to think of it, wasn't he, Alice? He certainly does think of all the nicest things for us."

"Dad is a brick," was Alice's quick reply. "I wish he were going with us. We won't dare go out now, for fear of missing Madame."

Mrs. Carter laughed and sat down to write a long letter to Paris.

"Your father didn't speak of Jack, but of course he's all right."

"Surely, Mother. He said 'all well.'"

A few days passed, pleasantly enough. There were walks along the river banks, where numberless patient and futile fishermen could always be seen, perfectly happy and never successful. There were excursions to the neighboring suburbs, and the cathedral ever stood waiting to welcome them into its calm seclusion. The little marble children still interested Alice. She thought of them now at Lan-

geais. They saw a good deal of Monsieur and Madame Joliffe and met some French friends of theirs, who proved to be charming. Priests and nuns frequented the house, and were received with the most generous hospitality by Madame Joliffe.

"Poor souls, they are as sheep without a fold," she would say.

"Where is Charles?" asked Alice one day.

"He is at school — at the military school of Saint Cyr," answered Madame. "Some day when there is to be a fine *manoeuvre* we will go there."

Alice opened her eyes with delight.

"I wish it were near enough for us to go," she thought.

One afternoon, on their return from a visit at the Joliffe's, they found a large automobile in front of the hotel with a coronet on the panel of the door.

"Madame la Baronne de Rivière" had come to see them and was even now waiting in the hotel parlor.

She was a simply dressed, pretty woman, with soft brown eyes — quite small and dainty in appearance. She spoke beautiful English and Alice decided that this was what a baroness ought to be like. She asked all sorts of questions, especially of Alice.

"My little girl is your age, I think," she said. "You must become friends. She is lonely in her big room now that her sister is at school."

Then Madame told them that she surely expected them for a visit at the chateau.

"You must stay for a week, at least," she said. "Or until Monsieur Carter returns. It is too forlorn here at the hotel. We are not gay, Agnes and I, but at least you will be comfortable and in a home."

"But Madame, you cannot wish to have absolute strangers descend on you in this way."

"But we do not consider you as strangers. '*Les amis de nos amis sont nos amis.*' (The friends of our friends are our friends.) The de Tonvilles are very intimate with us and Monsieur and Madame Lawrence from whom you had a letter of introduction have been life-long friends. Madame Lawrence was at school with me and it was through her husband that I met Monsieur de Rivière. It is a debt I can never repay."

So it was arranged that the next day Madame should send her big touring car and take Mrs. Carter, Alice and their baggage out to the chateau.

"If only Jack were going," said Alice. Both she and her mother missed him a great deal, and his letters were not as frequent as those of Mr. Carter.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CHATEAU DE RIVIÈRE — THE GHOST ROOM — UNCLE HENRI'S HISTORY

The chateau de Rivière was a charming place, built in the last century, after the accession of Napoleon at the close of the Revolution. It was surrounded by a park and beautiful gardens, and its gray towers rose above the trees in friendly fashion. The interior had been refinished by the late Baron and was most comfortable, although furnished in keeping with the exterior. There were many suites of rooms, one of which was occupied by Madame de Rivière and her daughters,— another by her brother, Monsieur le Doux, and a third was given over to Mrs. Carter and Alice.

Their breakfast was brought to them each morning on a little tray and a pretty French maid was ready at all times to be of use to them. Agnes de Rivière was like her mother, slim and dark; exquisite in her manners and a charming dancer. She seemed almost afraid of Alice, yet glad to be with her and show her about in the chateau and through the grounds. She was lonely and imaginative. Her room was full of religious images, and pictures, much to Alice's astonishment, and she explained them all to her. If one lost anything one prayed to St. Anthony; if one had any great desire one prayed to

another saint. Alice found a long string of beautiful gold and black beads and was told it was a rosary, blessed by the Pope.

"I say one prayer for each bead," explained Agnes, "then I will be sure not to forget any."

But the inhabitant of the chateau that won Alice's heart was a great black dog, Danish and almost as big as herself, short-haired, with affectionate brown eyes, and long drooping ears; he followed Madame de Rivière everywhere. Often he would lay his head and one of his forepaws on her lap.

"He does not know, poor thing, that he is so enormous," she would say.

Agnes seemed a little afraid of him but Alice tried to make friends at once.

"He loves to be noticed," said Madame de Rivière, delighted to find someone else to sympathize in her fondness for her pet.

Every afternoon they walked or drove and then returned for *goûter,* served in the garden. Madame de Rivière sang beautifully and in the evening they had music. Often friends would come and join them. Madame was most hospitable, yet always seemed to hold herself a little aloof.

"I love her, Mother," said Alice on the second day of her visit. "But why does she seem so sad?"

As Agnes was showing her through the library one day they came upon a door, finely carved, and so much like the panels of the woodwork that Alice would not have noticed it, had not Agnes remarked:

"Come quickly, do not linger near this door."

"Why not?" asked Alice promptly.

"Because we are never allowed to enter. It leads into a ghost room."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that strange sounds are heard there. No one has been allowed to go in there since my Uncle Henri disappeared into that room, and never came out."

"Whew!" said Alice. "I thought he was in Paris."

"No, that is my Uncle Raoul. My Uncle Henri was my father's brother. He was young and handsome and killed a man in a duel and then disappeared in the room that lies beyond that door. We hardly ever speak of him."

"Does your mother cry when you do?"

"Yes. She is sad when she thinks of it."

"When did he disappear?"

"Soon after I was born. I never saw him. But we may not enter the room; my mother has the key. Such noises are heard! They say that the ghost killed my Uncle Henri."

"Let's run," said Alice.

And they both ran. Nevertheless Alice thought much about the door, and the haunted room. She liked to think of the handsome Uncle Henri who had disappeared.

"If only Jack were here," she thought. "He'd go in and see the ghost, but I don't dare."

That evening Mrs. Carter said, "You seem very

fond of your dog, Madame de Rivière, and he is a noble creature."

"He belonged to my husband's brother who is dead," replied Madame de Rivière quietly.

"Uncle Henri!" thought Alice.

She was awakened that night by a long mournful sound like the howl of a dog. It seemed to come from somewhere near her room. It was strange and weird in the dark night.

"It's only the dog," thought Alice, shivering. "He has probably been shut out of Madame's room by mistake." She lay in bed trembling. There came another mournful sound but it was more muffled — it seemed farther away. Presently she fell asleep.

The next day she asked Agnes where the dog, Ogier, slept at night.

"Why, out in the stable," answered Agnes.

"He was in the house last night. I heard him," said Alice.

Agnes' eyes grew big with wonder.

"It must have been the ghost," she gasped. "You know the library is right under your room."

"It was the dog," said Alice. "What nonsense. I don't believe there is any ghost."

Nevertheless she lingered at bedtime and begged her mother to come up and kiss her good-night when she was in bed. Mrs. Carter was a little surprised. "Why, of course I will, don't I always, goosey?"

"Yes, but be sure to."

She hadn't told her mother about the ghost. In

the daytime she still clung to her belief that the sounds she had heard were only Ogier, and now she did not dare to think of it.

It rained that night in torrents. Alice could not sleep. Suddenly she heard the same mournful howl.

"It is the dog," she thought to herself. "I know it is. I am going to see."

She slipped on her wrapper and slippers and softly went to the door and out into the hall.

There was no sound there. She tiptoed to the head of the stairs — everywhere was darkness and silence.

An irresistible impulse drew her down the stairs and into the library. Still nothing but silence and darkness. Then she distinctly heard the sound of light footfalls on the floor, and a scratching noise. Then came a whine and long drawn howl. It surely came from behind the mysterious door.

"Ogier, Ogier," said Alice. "*Viens ici!*" (Come here.)

There was a quick bark and the scratching sound redoubled.

"There isn't any ghost, it's Ogier — and he gets in there somehow from the stable. He goes there to try and find Uncle Henri;" so thought Alice. She tried to open the door but couldn't.

Gradually the sounds died away and Alice went back to bed. The next day she asked to be allowed to go out to see the horses and the pony in the stable. Agnes and the French maid took her out. The stable was at some little distance from the house,

a great stone building where the men servants of the chateau lived on the floor above the horses and farm animals. An old groom was cleaning off the little pony cart when they arrived and Madame's chauffeur was directing another man who was blowing up the automobile tire. Alice and Agnes went in to see the pony which the groom showed to them. He was an old Irishman who had been "Uncle Henri's" servant.

"Do you take care of Ogier?" she asked him.

"Yes," he said. He could speak either French or English and now spoke to the little American girl in her own language.

"Does he ever run away at night?" she asked.

The old fellow looked at her suspiciously.

"No," he answered quite crossly. But Alice felt that he was not telling the truth.

"I heard the ghost last night," she said suddenly.

"Laws, Miss, what are you saying — no one has heard the ghost for months."

"It sounded to me like the howling of a dog," said Alice.

The groom stared.

"I am sure Ogier was in the chateau last night," she said positively.

All this time the French maid had been talking and laughing with Madame's chauffeur. Agnes stood listening to Alice with wide-open eyes.

"Didn't he get away last night? Now do tell me. I'll promise not to tell. I heard him in the ghost room," she added in a low voice.

Ryan, the groom, suddenly uttered an exclamation.

"It's truth, Miss, he got away last night. There was no holding him. But how in the name of goodness he got into the house passes me, for it rained in torrents and he was as dry as a bone when he got back."

"He was in the ghost room," said Alice. "He was looking for Uncle Henri."

Ryan turned quite pale.

"Oh, Miss," he said, "how could he get there? It was my poor master spirited away by the evil one that you heard."

"Your poor master must have been a dog, then," said Alice. "I know it was Ogier, 'cause he barked, and scratched to get out when I called his name."

"Where were you, Miss?"

"In the library."

"At night, Miss, alone!"

"I was awfully scared," said Alice, "but I wouldn't be scared if you were there. You let Ogier loose to-night and come into the library with me."

"But, Miss, it's as much as my place is worth."

"Agnes won't tell, will you? You can come, too, if you want. We must find out how Ogier gets there."

"We should tell the Madame," said Ryan. "But I don't dare speak to her about that room. You see, Miss, the men were after the master for killing of a count in a duel and he slipped into that secret room back of the library and when Madame and

Where the sun never shone — The dungeon at Loches

the rest of us went to find him after the men were gone, he was gone, too — clean spirited out of the tight room and no one could find him. That was ten years since and never a word from him."

"If Ogier can get in, he could get out, Ryan," said Alice suddenly.

The old fellow's face fairly shone.

"Oh, Miss, if it should be true! 'Twould lift a load from us all. But it can't be — it's ten years gone and if he were alive he would have sent us word."

"I want to see, anyhow," said Alice.

"So do I," said Ryan. "I'll try it with you, Miss, if Mamselle here will say nothing of it."

"I won't. I promise," said Agnes in a low, scared voice.

"Then how can we manage?"

"If you will let me in to-night, Miss, by the little kitchen door, we'll try it together. I wish we could get the key of the secret door, but we'll have to chance it."

"Agnes could get it."

"No, Miss, we mustn't ask Mamselle here to steal from her mother. But maybe I can open it myself. I have a bit of skill at picking locks, by your leave."

"All right, what time?" said Alice, her brown eyes fairly dancing.

"They are all asleep at eleven. I will come at half past."

"I hope I can keep awake," said Alice.

Then they went back to the house and found Madame de Rivière and Mrs. Carter about to take an automobile ride.

That evening Alice was all excitement. She could hardly sit still and her mother wondered what could be the matter. Agnes was absolutely silent, but her dark eyes followed Alice about in half-fearful admiration. At last bedtime came and then the household settled down to sleep.

Alice had a dreadful time keeping awake. The long ride in the crisp autumn air had made her very sleepy. But she managed somehow by sitting up in bed and getting up every few minutes to go to the window. After her mother came up she was afraid to move much for fear of disturbing her. They slept in rooms that opened out of each other.

When everything was quiet, Alice got up and slipped on some clothes. Then she crept downstairs very softly and into the kitchen hall. She waited at the little door until a quiet knock told her that Ryan was there. Then she drew back the bolts and let him in. He was fully dressed but drew off his shoes as he came in. He had a small lantern in his hand.

CHAPTER XVIII

ALICE AND RYAN DISCOVER THE GHOST — LETTER FROM UNCLE HENRI — THE CARTERS RETURN TO TOURS

Softly they went up to the library which was *au premier.*

"I think we might go in before we hear the noises," muttered Ryan. It was easy to see that he had not lost faith in the ghost.

Alice held the lantern while he skillfully picked the lock of the carved door. It swung open noiselessly and they went into the secret room. It was small and narrow, without a window; apparently without any other door than the one by which they had entered.

Ryan carefully felt along the walls, holding his lantern close so that he might see.

"There isn't a crack for a mouse to get in by — let alone a dog," he said. "I think we had best go, Miss."

Alice, too, felt that she must have been mistaken.

At that moment there came a long muffled howl from somewhere and a noise of running feet.

"Mother of Heaven, Miss, it's the ghost."

"It isn't, it's Ogier," said Alice. She whistled and called softly, "Ogier, Ogier —"

There was a muffled bark and the scratching began.

"You're right, Miss. But where is he? That's what passes me. The sound seemed to come from the outer side of the room. The side that must be toward the wall of the chateau."

Ryan knocked against the wall and was rewarded by a whine and more scratching.

"As I'm a sinful man, he must be there, Miss, but how did he get there?"

"The way Uncle Henri got out," said Alice.

She got down on the floor and felt along the bottom of the wall. She knew somehow that she would find an opening. Suddenly her hand seemed to touch something. She pressed it, and a stone which had seemed part of the outer wall sprang back and proved to be a thin section of wall. Instantly the cold nose of Ogier was poked through.

"You were right, Miss," said Ryan in great excitement. "But what next?"

He put his hand inside and felt around. Presently he discovered a spring. He pressed it and with creaking and groaning a section of wall slid slowly out of place and disclosed a narrow, dark passage in the wall. This was filled by the joyous Ogier, who wagged his tail energetically. As the secret paneling rolled back, a piece of paper, carefully folded, fell at their feet.

Ryan picked it up and his hand trembled.

"It's the master's hand," he said brokenly. "Who's it addressed to, Miss, I can't see."

"To Madame de Rivière," said Alice, after she had puzzled over it for a moment.

"To-morrow you shall give it to her, Miss. I dare not. To-night we must follow Ogier."

The dog had turned and had disappeared in the dark passage. It was so narrow that Ryan had difficulty in passing. In a moment they came to a long, steep flight of steps. They went down, the man going first with the lantern.

Presently the passage widened but became very low. They crawled along. It seemed very damp.

"We are under ground," said Ryan. Then they smelled a faint odor of stables. Now the passage was only a hole and they had to squirm through. Then all of a sudden some fresh air blew in their faces and Ryan's lantern showed them to be back of a pile of old stuff in an unused stall at the very furthest end of the stable from where the horses were now kept.

Ogier was standing outside, barking delightedly and wagging his tail.

"Holy Mother, it must be the way that the master went out," said Ryan. "Miss, Miss, you've done a good work this night, I'm thinking. Maybe some gladness will come to the Madame's eyes now, and maybe the ghost will no more be heard. But what passes my knowledge is why the others did not know of the secret way out, and search the passage. And now you must go back to bed, Miss. You're only half dressed and not fit to be out in the cold, and it's myself has no shoes," he added.

He drew on some boots and wrapping Alice in his coat he carried her back to the chateau. "I'll close the door in the library," she told him, so he did not go up with her, but took his shoes at the door and departed.

She was dreadfully tired, but happy and excited. It didn't seem as if she could wait till morning. She went to sleep with the precious note under her pillow.

At breakfast she told her mother everything.

Mrs. Carter was astonished. She was also much disturbed.

"My dear child, you should have told before," she said. "You are not in a storybook. You have not acted right by your hostess or by me."

"But, Mother," said Alice, almost in tears, "I did want to find the ghost. And Ryan was with me. O, Mother, I just meant to help. I know Madame will not be angry." Somehow, however, she was not so sure. Suppose Madame *should* be angry. Mrs. Carter and Alice went to Madame's apartments and knocked.

The baroness bade them enter. She was sitting in the bay window, dressed in a pretty morning gown, and Agnes sat beside her. The girl was crying softly.

"Madame, Alice has a confession to make and a story to relate," said Mrs. Carter. She pretended not to notice Agnes' tears.

"I do not believe it is anything very bad," said Madame, smiling.

"Oh, but it is. I mean it's something fine!" said Alice.

"What is it, my dear? Come here and tell me."

"We found a secret way from the ghost room to the stable. Ogier found it and we found him and Uncle Henri got out that way and he left a note for you." She gave the note to Madame, as she spoke.

The baroness grew very white and her eyes shone like stars.

"It is his handwriting," she said quietly, and crossed herself. "I will read it and then you can tell me."

She read the letter and then burst into tears.

"Oh, my dear, my dear, what would I not have given to have found this before. Thank Heaven you have found it now. It is indeed from the lost one — and I believe that he still lives, still lives."

"O, Mother," cried Agnes, and threw her arms about her mother's neck.

"You, too, Alice," cried Madame de Rivière joyfully and gathered the two children into one glad embrace.

"He wrote it the day he disappeared. He begs forgiveness for having brought such sorrow to us. He says that he is going to America but if we can forgive him we must write to him. He gives his address. And we never received it! Oh! and he must have thought we had cast him off. Oh! can we ever find him now? Can we ever find him?"

"We can try," said Mrs. Carter soberly. "Mr. Carter will do all in his power to help you."

"But it is the blessed little one who has brought us the good news. Tell us, dear, how you found it."

Alice then told her story. The baroness was astonished at the way she had persevered, but more than all was she amazed at the existence of the secret passageway.

"Why did not my husband know of it and why did we not search and find?" she said over and over again. "I cannot understand."

"The note was tucked under the secret door, so that those in the room would not be able to see it; only after the wall door was opened."

"He must have thought we knew."

"Maybe he left a message with someone outside," suggested Alice. "Maybe he told Ogier."

"Ogier knew the way, too, didn't he?" said the baroness. "My husband often feared there might have been a concealed trap in the floor and that Henri had somehow fallen to his death. If he only could have known. They parted, you know, in anger."

"Perhaps Ryan could help you to some knowledge," suggested Mrs. Carter.

Madame rang for her maid and sent the girl for Ryan. Presently the old Irishman entered.

He looked weary as if he had passed a sleepless night.

"It is good news that this little one has brought us, Ryan," said Madame. And she briefly told him what the note had contained.

"Poor Monsieur Henri," said the old man. "What must he have thought of us all. To cast him off that way! But how were we to know? Didn't Monsieur le Baron know, Madame, of the secret way? Why did the master only know of it? That's what puzzles me."

"It is what is puzzling us all," said Mrs. Carter gravely.

"The dog must have known," said Ryan, "for I am convinced he's been through it often, frightening the life out of all of us. Maybe he trusted to the dog to lead us there. But why was he the only one in the house to know the secret way?"

"I fear we may never know," said Madame. "Unless we can find Monsieur Henri. Ryan, we must send word at one to Monsieur le Doux in Paris."

"Indeed yes, Madame. I will take the word, Madame, if Madame will give me the telegram."

The baroness wrote her telegram and gave it to Ryan to take. The old man left at once. Madame having been so long silent, now could not speak enough of Henri. He had been the younger brother of her husband, a handsome, wild young fellow, but beloved by everyone. Then came the terrible day when he had fought the fatal duel with a neighbor, and friend. Henri, in fear of his life and filled with horror at his own deed, had fled to the chateau. There had been hot words between the brothers. Then the gendarmes had arrived and Henri had fled to the secret room. He had never been seen after.

"You can imagine our grief," said Madame, "and horror at the mystery. Oh, if only he is living now, what joy there will be."

Later in the day as they sat about the fire, Madame said:

"Do you know, I believe I have solved the mystery of the note. My husband's father died suddenly, very shortly before the fatal duel. I believe he must have told Henri of the secret passage and then death overtook him before he could tell my husband. Henri thought that of course we knew. Ah, if we had known! What must he have thought of us. Now it may be too late."

"You must be sure and let us know, Madame, if you ever hear," said Mrs. Carter. "We shall be more than interested."

The next morning Monsieur le Doux arrived.

He was a gray-haired, fine-looking man, intellectual and aristocratic. He was amazed at the story they had to tell and at once decided that they must communicate with the American Consul. So back to Paris he went, leaving them all excitement.

After he had gone Madame ordered that the secret passage be closed, much to the disgust of Alice and also of Ogier, who went to the hole in the stable, now to be forever filled in, and whined and scratched. He also followed Alice about and seemed to regard her as quite one of the family.

Agnes and her guest drove about a good deal in the pony cart, with Ryan as an escort. He, as well

as the dog, had become quite devoted to "the little Miss." So the days passed.

Mr. Carter wrote often. He said that Jack was happy at school, that Mademoiselle would soon be well again, that the twins were joyous and healthy under the charge of Bridget.

"They spend half their time at the Luxembourg Gardens and the Tuileries; the other half, and by far the larger, they pass with Madame de Tonville, who has fairly adopted us all. Yesterday she took them to the dogs' cemetery, which delighted them. I wish we had taken Alice there. Some of the little statues that people have put up to their late faithful companions are very quaint and delightful.

"The twins are also fascinated by the bath man; I don't think you saw him. He goes from house to house with a tub and a little boiler and carries a hot bath to your room. He really is an institution in a land where bathrooms are so scarce.

"It is dreadful to be away from you so long. We will surely join you within the week at Tours."

Of course, Mrs. Carter wrote her husband of Alice's adventure. Indeed he had already heard it from Monsieur le Doux who had consulted him as to the best way to find a trace of the missing Monsieur Henri.

Mr. Carter could give them little encouragement. The French Consul in New York must be communicated with, but after so many years the result was more than doubtful.

Nevertheless Madame de Rivière refused to give up hope.

"It cannot be that this letter is a voice from the dead," she would say. "I am sure that Henri is still living."

But the rest had little hope.

"It will take months, if not years, unless there is some lucky hit," Mr. Carter wrote. "But these continental people always think the United States is about the size of Switzerland. They know we are from Texas but ask us if we know a Mister John Jones who went to Boston last year."

"I do hope they will get some news," said Mrs. Carter. She and Madame de Rivière had come very close to each other in these trying days. Madame clung to her and wanted to talk all the time of her hopes and fears. She could not bear to think of their departure. But Mr. Carter wrote one day that he expected to start from Paris in two days, bringing Mademoiselle, Bridget and the twins.

"You will find Bridget a great comfort as well as a delight. Mademoiselle can now give some time to teaching Alice, while you and I can do a little gallivanting. Do try and get an apartment."

So Mrs. Carter wrote to Madame Joliffe, and they packed their trunk with the assistance of nearly every one in the chateau, and early one morning the automobile took them into Tours to meet Mr. Carter and his party.

"If only Jack were coming, too," said Mrs. Carter.

They had parted with the greatest affection from Madame de Rivière and Agnes.

"We are so near that you will often come to us as long as you remain in Tours," said Madame. "We will send the automobile for you. You must bring Monsieur Carter and the twins to spend the day. I want to know you all."

Madame Joliffe was at the hotel and greeted them with the delightful news that her friends had decided to go to Paris for November and December and would rent to the Carters the apartment for as long a time as they desired. It seemed too good to be true.

"I wish we could settle in it before your father comes, but perhaps it is just as well. We will have a week at the hotel and look about us and make arrangements and then move in. What fun it will be to move into a ready-to-wear French apartment, with two servants all at our disposal." And it was with this piece of good news that Mrs. Carter welcomed her husband and the twins at the railroad station.

CHAPTER XIX

THE FIGHT IN THE AIR — JACK AT SCHOOL — "FOR SERVICE RENDERED"

While Alice was having these delightful adventures, Jack was at school in Neuilly. There were a number of English and American as well as French boys, and after the first homesickness at parting with his father, he had a very good time. The masters were most of them English and the school was run more or less on the English plan. Jack did not see much of his father who was very busy. But he himself had to keep at work to hold his place among the boys, and did not have time to regret anything. But from day to day he hoped for some word from Monsieur Jean.

One afternoon, having finished his study for the next day, he was running out to join the rest of the boys in a game of "Rugby" when one of the masters called to him.

"Carter, there is a gentleman here to see you."

Jack went to the parlor and there found Monsieur Jean who embraced him, greatly to his embarrassment.

"Jack, Jack, *mon ami,* I am so glad, so more than glad, to see you. It is a lifetime since we met."

"Monsieur Jean, tell me all about it. I can hardly wait to hear."

"Can we walk — outside — in the court perhaps? I would not wish to be overheard," he added in a low voice.

They went out into the court together and while the others played "Rugby" Monsieur Jean graphically told his story.

Jack listened without speaking.

"Antoine and I rose instantly after we left you and then steered in the direction of the chateau. You will remember it was very dark. Then we turned on the search light and swept the sky as far as we were able. The other aeroplane was not visible. I felt sure that they had landed somewhere for the purpose of taking up the German from whom you rescued me. We made a short flight and then again used the search light. This time we discovered the Bleriot mounting rapidly. They were heading eastward. Of course we followed and the chase began. They, too, used their search light and saw us. So it was a question of who would shoot first, when we came near enough.

"I found that my Antoinette was somewhat more rapid and therefore ascended higher than they in the air, so as to have the advantage of firing down. They also tried to ascend but soon saw that my machine was the more rapid. We turned our light full upon them as we flew above them. They had no guns, only pistols. So we knew that they were at our mercy. There were three men, Berkmann, the other German and an unknown. I called to them that I wished to speak to them — that we had guns and

could enforce our commands in the name of the Republic.

"I do not know whether they heard me, but I saw that they were rapidly descending. Then I knew myself for a fool. Once on the ground, they would have the advantage of numbers. I saw that I must fire upon them. But it was somewhat difficult. I had to manage the machine and also the search light while Antoine held the guns. We could neither of us move much. As you know, in an aeroplane it is impossible. One thing was certain — the war must be finished before they landed. We would never be allowed to touch foot to earth alive, should they be able to land safely.

"'Antoine, you must fire,' I said. 'You must hit that machine at the propeller and you must kill no one.' After what seemed an endless time, Antoine fired. They were now not more than eight hundred meters from the ground as I figured it. We were at least three hundred meters above them. Antoine's first shot succeeded and I saw that they had lost control.

"The great machine seemed to reel. I bade Antoine shoot again.

"'No one must be killed but they must be stopped,' I commanded.

"Antoine shot again. I could not tell what had occurred for a moment. Then their machine glided to the ground, toppling over in a mess of wreckage. In three minutes we had landed and with cocked pistols were running to the other machine. It

was black, but Antoine had a flash light — no, lantern, with him. There came no sound from the other machine. We knew not what was awaiting us there. Antoine turned the light of his lantern upon the overturned Bleriot. The three men were there, caught like rats in a trap, unable to get out. We could not tell if they were hurt.

"I called to Berkmann that I must have the papers and the model that he had stolen from my *atelier*. I spoke in English, remembering that he spoke it also.

"'By what right have you fired upon us?' he replied.

"'I will fire again if you do not give what you stole,' I answered, 'and this time it will not be your machine that I hit.'

"'I have nothing,' he said.

"'Then I will shoot,' I answered.

"'We can shoot also,' he said.

"'Then why don't you?' I asked. 'Your game is done, Berkmann. Give me my things.'

"'Come and take them,' he taunted.

"I would have given a fortune to have had more light.

"'Antoine,' I said, 'go back and turn on the big light.'

"The next moment the dazzling light shone on the wrecked biplane.

"The men were caught, I soon saw, beyond hope of escape. But they still held their pistols.

"'Berkmann,' I said, 'we have our guns. We

can shoot you at a safe distance. Why will you sacrifice these lives? Give me my papers.'

"'Come and take them,' he repeated.

"I bade Antoine turn off the light. I was still wondering why they did not shoot. We were now in absolute darkness.

"Antoine and I crawled along the ground in the direction of our enemies. Berkmann was the nearest. He lay caught beneath the wings. Jack, I knew then what fear was. It seemed to me that the next instant I might be shot.

"We crawled very near and then made a rush toward where we knew Berkmann lay. When we took hold of him he was limp. He had fainted. O, Jack, he is brave, a hero. He had been hurt, oh, badly hurt, and he was still brave. It was the same with the others.

"We managed somehow to rescue them from their painful position. It was with a feeling of shame that I searched Berkmann and found what I had come for. And now, what were we to do? We could not leave them in this way. We examined them and found that the unknown had apparently only been stunned. Berkmann was badly hurt, we feared. About the other German we were not sure.

"We did not know where we were. The search light showed a field and beyond it woods. Then we heard voices. *Ciel,* but we were glad. It seems we were not far from a village. People in a house at the outside had seen the strange lights fall as it were from the sky — had heard a crash, and had come to

see what had occurred. We explained to them that we had been making a test of flying by night. I told them that we were of the army. That we had witnessed the falling of the other machine and had descended to render assistance. With the aid of these men the three unfortunates were carried to the village and a doctor was called. We left them and returned to Orleans, after getting our directions from the villagers."

"O, Monsieur Jean, if I had only been there, too. It was the hardest thing I ever did, to go back."

"I know, I know, my boy. But it was not possible. You are only a boy, *mon ami,* though a brave one. What would Monsieur, your father, have said?"

"He said 'if only I had been a man,'" said Jack.

Monsieur Jean laughed.

"Your father, he is splendid!" he said. "No wonder you are a young hero, being the son of such a father."

"Have you seen Herr Berkmann since?"

"Alphonse accompanied him to the frontier yesterday. He is not to return to France. The unknown man and the other German have been arrested, for they were men in the service of the government. It may be that you will be asked to identify your two friends of the hotel. But, Jack, *mon ami,* I am vindicated, and I have my model. The plans they may have copies of, but that I am sure they cannot have mastered. It will make a revolu-

tion in the art of flying. One can go slow, slow, poise in the air, like the great bird — and I have saved the secret for France."

Jack drew a deep breath.

"But you, *mon gars,* you saved my life. I cannot say, it is yours,— because it is to my country. But after my country, I live for you. I do not like to think that some day you will leave me here and return to your country. *Enfin,* it is not for some time. In the meanwhile, we must see much of each other. You are at school, I am in the army, but somehow we will manage it."

"Can't you take me out again in your Antoinette?" asked Jack. "I would give anything to go."

"If your father permits, *mon ami.* Perhaps you will both go, *hein?*"

"At night, Monsieur Jean?"

"No, no, Jack, not now. Some day when it is more safe. Now I would not be willing."

"Well, in the daytime, then. I suppose it's kind of nervy to ask you."

"Anything that you ask, Jack, I will do if I can."

They chatted for a while longer and then Monsieur Jean had to leave. But Jack's importance in the school rose at once. Even Roger, his senior, who had thought it necessary to be a trifle superior as an "old boy," even some of the masters, were anxious to learn the history of his acquaintance with Jean Noir, one of the foremost French aviators.

Several days after this Jack received permission to go with Monsieur Jean to the house of his commandant. The principal of the school could not well refuse a request from headquarters, Jack's father having been notified and having also given consent. Jack was all excitement, and half afraid.

The French commander, a gray-haired gentleman, with bristling mustaches, received them very kindly. In a few moments three men entered, one a French soldier and the others Jack recognized as the two men he had seen in the court of the Hotel des Saints Pères. Jack did not hesitate to identify them. Then he was asked to identify the paper which he now saw for the third time. His statements were clear and unhesitating. Monsieur Jean was delighted. After the two prisoners were removed, the commandant gravely thanked him and shook his hand.

"My boy," he said in French, but speaking so slowly and impressively that Jack understood every word, "My boy, your country should be proud of such a son. Some day I know she will be. Monsieur has told me of the service you have rendered to him as well as to France. We cannot show our recognition publicly. For this affair must remain secret forever. I will thank you in the name of the army, and I will present to you the pistol which you so bravely used."

The pistol, shining as if new, was lying on the table. He handed it to the delighted boy, bowing formally as he did so. On the polished metal the words were engraved, "Jack Carter for service ren-

dered." And then came the date. Monsieur Jean shook his hand.

"Monsieur, thank you. It's — it's perfectly bully," said Jack, who was almost unable to voice his sentiments.

Then they departed and Jack returned to his school with the precious pistol in his pocket. He hated to think that he must not show it to the boys. He would have to wait till he got back to Texas. He could show it to his father, though, and could hardly wait until that gentleman appeared on the day following. He had come to say good-by before going to join Mrs. Carter and Alice, and he brought along the twins. They were delighted with the school. Jack showed them his bed in the dormitory and his desk in the hall. He took them to the chapel, and showed them the recreation field. He found an opportunity also to show his pistol while the twins were occupied in throwing the pillows from his bed at each other. Mr. Carter looked at it long and seriously.

"It is a fine thing to have, Jack, and I'm proud of you. It is a fine thing to render a service to a nation. You have been lucky to be able to do it. Don't lose that pistol, Jack. Some day a boy of yours may be mighty glad to have it."

"Have what, Father?" called Bob.

"Sharp eyes and ears, Bob," said Mr. Carter. "If you hadn't been buried in pillows you would have seen and heard something which now you never, never will!"

"Oh, Daddy," said Katherine, running over and putting her hand in his, "won't you tell *me?*"

"Goosey, we were talking about some of Jack's doings here. Nothing to interest you. Come, kiddies, it's time to say good-by."

Jack hated to see his father go. Even the pistol hidden in the depths of his garments did not console him. This was harder than rescuing Monsieur Jean.

"It will not be long, my boy. We will all be together again in two months. Maybe I will have to run up to Paris now and then on business. And the De Tonvilles are here and your beloved Monsieur Jean."

Nevertheless the parting was a hard one.

"My, but I'm glad I'm not going to school," said Bob.

"Good-by, Jack. We're going to ride on top of a bus and maybe have ice cream for supper."

So they went and Jack tried to forget his homesickness playing ball with the boys.

CHAPTER XX

LOCHES — UNCLE HENRI AGAIN — THE JOURNEY SOUTH

The twins were delighted with Tours. They liked to play in the Joliffes' garden; they liked to walk along the road beside the river; but above all did they enjoy those days when Madame de Rivière's automobile came for them and they were whisked away to the chateau to run at their pleasure in the fields about the farm.

The Carters being settled safely in the apartment, Mademoiselle felt quite capable of taking charge of the children, with Bridget to help her and the two French servants. So Mr. and Mrs. Carter frequently went off for the day, and sometimes Mr. Carter went away for a few days on business. Alice studied most of the morning with Mademoiselle. She missed having someone of her own age to play with, for she only saw Agnes occasionally.

It seemed strange to settle down just as if they were at home; to study and take walks, to run into the pantry to the cookey jar and find funny French *gâteaux!*

The twins were never tired of talking about Louis and Léon Roulet, and Mers. Curiously enough they found it difficult to speak English to their mother

at first. They chatted in French to each other and even to Alice. Poor Bridget had to guess at what they said for they did not feel it necessary to take as much pains in talking to her as they did when speaking to their mother. Bob offered to teach Bridget French but she only laughed at him.

"Dear me, Master Bob, how you do talk. You had best talk English or you'll be forgetting it. Then what will you do when you get back to your own country? They'll ll all think you're a little Frenchy."

"I rather guess not! I'd knock any fellow down who said that," replied the valiant Bob.

"I wonder if they will ever hear from Uncle Henri," said Alice to her mother one day.

"They could not hear as soon as this. Why, it's only a little over a fortnight since we were there."

"I wish they would hear before we go."

"I am afraid they may never hear," answered her mother gravely.

"What is it you are afraid of?"

Mr. Carter walked into the room. He had been in Paris for two days. Alice ran to kiss him.

"Were you talking about the de Rivières?"

"Yes, dear, when did you get in?"

"Just this minute. I heard the strangest thing last night at a dinner. I was dining with some French and American engineers and the talk turned on ghosts, after the business of the evening was over. I told about Alice's adventure. When I had finished a Western chap from California asked me

what sort of a looking fellow this Monsieur de Rivière was. I could not tell him. He said:

"'I met a fellow out in Colorado three or four years ago, French, and awfully good sort. He and I got sort of chummy on the ranch where we'd both turned up. I was loafing and he was working. He was a most fastidious chap, wouldn't run with the cowboys; they called him 'Monseigneur.' I asked him how on earth he'd landed there and he told me that he had fought a duel and had been cast off by his family. He had given them his address, he said, but they had never sent him any word for nearly ten years. I think he said he came from near Tours.' I asked what his name was. The man couldn't tell me but thought he had heard somebody call him Henry."

"Oh, Daddy, it must be Uncle Henri," cried Alice.

"I suppose it might be. I hate to say anything for fear of raising their hopes. I think I'll tell Monsieur le Doux and he can communicate with the French consul in San Francisco."

"Daddy, it must be he."

"But that was several years ago, Robert. He may not be there."

"True; they will have to take their chances on that. I'll look up Monsieur to-morrow morning. Then how would you like to go to Loches in the afternoon and spend the night, Kate?"

"How would it be to take Alice and Agnes de Rivière?" suggested Mrs. Carter. "I think Loches

"He goes from house to house with a tub"

would interest them with its dungeons and prisons. It has so much history, too."

"All right, suppose we do. I can get her to-morrow when I go out to see Monsieur le Doux. But not a word of the man who may be Uncle Henri, do you hear, Alice?"

"Surely, Daddy. Oh, but it will be fun to have Agnes go!"

The next morning Mr. Carter drove out to the chateau. After he had talked to Monsieur, he suggested their plan to Madame de Rivière. She was delighted, and called to Agnes to tell her of the fun in store for her.

So that afternoon four happy people set out from Tours, and Mr. Carter mailed a letter from Monsieur le Doux to the French consul in San Francisco.

The town of Loches covered a small hill, the top of which was capped by the stone towers of the castle.

"It looks something like Mt. Saint Michel," suggested Alice.

They took a *voiture* from the station, left their bags at the hotel and drove up to the top of the hill to the castle.

After a short period of silence Alice said:

"There's always an old part to these towns and then there's a little bit of very new part with a square and a Hotel de Ville in it. What on earth is a Hotel de Ville, and why don't we ever stay at it?"

"Why, Alice," said Mr. Carter, "you little goosey, the Hotel de Ville is the city hall, the mu-

nicipal building. Of course it is the new part of the cities. In France large private houses are often called ' Hotel ' and so are the public buildings. Don't you remember the ' Hotels ' in Paris that were anything but hotels in our sense of the word?"

"That's true. I never thought of that. O, Daddy, what a queer old church with all those funny animals."

They had arrived at the old Collegiate Church.

"In 1180 began the church as it now stands, all broken into points and angles, with not so much as the line of the roof horizontal," read Mr. Carter from the book which he was carrying, "Old Touraine."

The church was very white, being built entirely of white stone, and had two beautiful pointed steeples. Over the main door were carved curious animals and creatures half human. The interior was simple and very impressive. The old sacristan who showed them about, led them down into a subterranean chapel which had formerly, he said, had a secret communication with the castle.

"Like the one in your chateau," said Alice, turning to Agnes.

"Can't you imagine that pious old fiend, Louis XI, coming here to pray for the souls of the fellows he had murdered in the dungeons?" said Mr. Carter. At which horrid suggestion, they all shuddered.

They visited the Eastern, the old part of the castle next, and were taken to the dungeons and

prisons far, far below the earth, where the sun never shone, and the poor unfortunate who had been left to languish had been in a pitiable plight indeed.

They saw the place where the cage had hung in which the miserable Cardinal Balue had been imprisoned. Too short for him to lie down, too low for him to stand, he was exhibited there for his cruel master to taunt.

"Let's go up — I hate these places," said Mrs. Carter. "Thank Heaven we live now-a-days."

The newer part of the castle was very delightful with its beautiful chapel in which is the tomb of Agnes Sorel. She lies with two lambs at her feet, her face charming in the white marble.

"You know Agnes means lamb," said Agnes. "And are not these lovely? Perhaps when I die I may have some lambs upon my tomb."

"Child, don't talk about it," said Mrs. Carter, with a shudder.

The chapel was in a fine gray tower and next to this the part of the chateau built by Charles VII and then that of Louis XII.

"See, Alice, this part, called the façade, is like part of the chateau at Blois. It must have been built at about the same period. They had fashions in architecture even then."

They went up the stairs to the little oratory of Anne of Brittany.

"Your old friend of Langeais and the mother of the marble children in Tours, Alice," said Mrs. Carter. It was a tiny little place, all beautifully

carved with her emblems, the dainty, dog-like ermine and the twisted cord.

"It wouldn't be a bad place to say one's prayers in, even for a queen," said Mr. Carter. "How do you like Loches, Agnes?"

"I think this part is beautiful. But the dungeons are too cruel."

"I think so, too. Well, children, it's getting late. We must be going back to the hotel."

The next morning they wandered about the curious old town. It happened to be market day and all the peasants from neighboring hamlet and farm drove in on their high carts. They brought geese and hens and goats, cheese and milk and butter, vegetables and all sorts of farm produce to sell. Men and women were dressed in blue and the women had white caps. The harness of the horses was decorated with brass and often with jingling metal ornaments which gave a festive sound as well as a gay appearance.

"These French markets are like the one in New Orleans," remarked Mr. Carter, "which is quite natural, as that was settled by French people."

"O, Mother, see those pretty brown pitchers with the cheese in them. Couldn't I buy one?" said Alice suddenly.

"Why, surely. Ask how much they cost."

They proved to be "un sou."

"How much is that?" whispered Alice. "Have I as much money left?"

"That is the old name for a centime — which is

one fifth of a cent," replied Mr. Carter gravely. "I think the united family might manage it."

So the little brown earthenware pitcher with its cover was purchased and Alice was delighted at the bargain. Mrs. Carter bought another for Agnes; and then they proceeded slowly, down the narrow, quaint old streets to the station.

"I wish Agnes could always be with us," said Alice. "It has been so much more fun to have her along."

"Indeed it has," said Mr. Carter heartily.

"Oh, you are so good," Agnes cried. "I have been so happy."

"We must manage to do it again," Mrs. Carter said. "It's a great pleasure to us all."

"I wish we could be always together. I wish you were to be here at the Christmas festival," said Agnes. "Then you could come to us for the fête. How I hate to think of you in a hotel. We could make you so happy at the chateau."

"Oh, well, Christmas is a whole month away. Who knows what may happen," laughed Mr. Carter. "But it is nice of you to think of it, little girl."

Agnes put her small hand in Mr. Carter's.

"You are big like my father," she said. "And you like little girls as he did, don't you? My Uncle Raoul, he does not like children."

"What are you thinking about, Alice?" asked her mother. There had been a few moments of silence, as they all sat in the train and watched the country slowly roll away from them.

"Nothing; just Christmas last year," answered Alice soberly.

Mr. and Mrs. Carter exchanged glances.

"Don't think about it now. It's a long time till Christmas."

"I'll try not to."

"Just remember that we'll all be together — Jack and all of us. That in itself will make a fête of it."

When they reached the apartment they found a letter from Jack, most enthusiastic about his school and the fun he was having. He had been to supper with the de Tonvilles; he had been to Rheims with Monsieur Jean and had taken another turn in an aeroplane. He was on the second lower school "Rugby" team, and only wished he were going to have a big piece of mince pie on Thanksgiving Day.

"Two or three of us American boys are going to have a feed that evening. Of course these heathens don't have a holiday, but we are going to celebrate. Won't you send us a cake or something?"

"Bless the boy, of course we will," said Mr. Carter at this point. "We'll send them a regular spread. Let's see, when is it?"

"Thursday week," answered Mrs. Carter promptly. "We ought to send them turkey and cranberry sauce, but I suppose cakes and pies will have to do."

"I don't believe they will make any criticism," laughed Mr. Carter. "What's this letter, Kate? It's postmarked Nîmes, in Provence. Who do you know there?"

"No one," answered Mrs. Carter, and opened the envelope.

"It is from someone named Noir. Why it must be some relative of Monsieur Jean," said Mr. Carter, looking over her shoulder.

"It is from Madame Noir. O, Robert, it is an invitation to us all for Christmas. She asks us to spend Christmas at the chateau in Provence. She wants to meet Jack, 'who saved her boy's life,' and she wants to meet us all. They want us to see what Christmas is in Provence."

"They certainly are bricks," cried Alice. "O, Mother, we must go."

"Hurrah, hurrah!" cried the twins. "What is a Christmas in Provence?"

"I don't see how we could all go to one house," said Mrs. Carter. "They are certainly kind and hospitable to ask us, but there are so many of us."

"Come, Kate, I think we had better accept. They do owe us one on Monsieur Jean's account. Let them have a chance to do something for us. Just think of a real Christmas instead of a make-shift at a hotel. I vote we accept."

"O, Daddy, of course we must," chorused Alice and the twins.

"They do seem to want us," added Mrs. Carter, with a doubtful tone in her voice.

"Of course they want us," came from Bob. "Why shouldn't they? Aren't we about the nicest ever?"

"We can think it over, anyway," remarked Mrs. Carter.

Alice ran over and threw her arms round her mother's neck. "O, Mother, we just must. Just think how Jack will feel. He will be so happy. Mother, we must."

"I think so, too, Alice. It's too good to be lost," remarked Mr. Carter.

The matter was dropped for the time, but Alice sang as she danced away to get ready for lunch. She had no doubt in her own mind. They were going to have a real "homey Christmas" after all instead of a gloomy one in some hotel.

Early in December the apartment had to be given up and the southward trip began.

The parting with the de Rivières was a sad one, for they had become sincerely attached to each other. Nothing had been heard as yet concerning "Uncle Henri," but Madame and Agnes both promised to send word the moment that any news should come to them.

"Whether it be good or bad lies in God's hands — but you shall know it almost as soon as we do," Madame assured them.

Traveling with whole family, including Mademoiselle and Bridget, who had become indispensable, was not the simplest thing imaginable. They spent some time in La Rochelle, the cleanest and tidiest of cities with its numberless little arcades and its ramparts overlooking the sea.

"And thou Rochelle, our own Rochelle,
proud City of the Waters,"

quoted Mr. Carter,

"'Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy
mourning daughters.'

I don't see many mourning daughters now. It certainly doesn't appear like a town that has been besieged. Look at those peaceful Bréton fisherfolk and the little toy boats in the harbor. And as for all this whitewash, *that* never went through a siege."

"It looks like those towns in Holland," said Alice. "It's so clean and neat. I like it better than the dirty old places."

"Those chaps who had to emigrate must have been sorry," remarked Mr. Carter. "You know, Alice, that a great many Huguenots fled from here to America in the old days of persecution."

"Weren't the Catholics ever persecuted?" asked Alice.

"Surely — during Cromwell's time in England — in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, too,— and remember that it is only recently that the Catholics have been allowed to sit in the English Parliament."

"Our New England ancestors were pretty hard on them, too," said Mrs. Carter. "It does seem strange why religion should make people so bitter."

"Not religion, Kate, but religious convictions. It's quite a different matter. But I do feel sorry

for the poor chaps who had to leave this town. I agree with Alice. It's fine."

From Rochelle they went to Bordeaux, which they found to be a prosperous modern city, with fine streets and boulevards, and large houses. The children were never tired of wandering along the *quais,* with Mademoiselle and Bridget. They watched the ships come in and go out, they watched the lading and unlading, they watched the strange-looking sailors and imagined themselves sailing away to unknown lands.

So the time passed. Mr. Carter was away a great deal. Their time in France was almost over and he wished to make the most of it in a business way. Jack was to join them at Christmas, and was to come down from Paris with Monsieur Jean.

CHAPTER XXI

PROVENCE — MONSIEUR JEAN'S FAMILY — PONT AU GARD

Two weeks before Christmas the Carters arrived at the Chateau Noir.

Mrs. Carter had made some objections to going so long before the feast day but the General had insisted.

"We begin our festivities at least ten days before," he said, "and you must become acquainted with our young people and our customs. Then, too, you will wish to go to Nîmes and Pont au Gard and can do this so much more comfortably from the chateau." Indeed the hospitable gentleman would take no refusal.

On a wonderful December day they drove from Nîmes up to the home of Monsieur Jean — situated on the side of a hill, and commanding a beautiful view of the valley of the Rhône. The chateau was a very ancient one, built of gray stone, with a massive tower. In the rear were the low-lying farm buildings and further up the hill were gardens and an olive orchard. The soft gray-green of the olive trees was beautiful against the deep blue of the sky. The General and Madame Noir met them at the door and brought them into the hall where *goûter* awaited them; also Monsieur Jean's older sister and

her two children, about the age of the twins. Two great fireplaces were on either side of the hall and the piled up wood showed that one must be prepared for cold weather even in sunny Provence.

The twins were delighted to find the two French children and at once began to talk to them in a steady stream of excellent French. Bridget went to their rooms to unpack some of the valises. Somehow she managed to feel at home in these old French chateaux, perhaps because some ancestor had been one of the loyal Irish gentlemen who served the French kings.

Madame Noir drew Alice to her, and asked her many questions in her charming Provençal French, most of which the girl could not understand. She wanted to know all about Jack, the boy who had saved her son's life.

Mrs. Carter sat down beside Madame René, Monsieur Jean's sister who dispensed the tea and cakes. Mr. Carter and the General at once became absorbed in the problems of construction involved in the building of the Roman Amphitheater in Nîmes.

That night the twins could hardly sleep for excitement. Their heads were full of the Christmas plans which Eduard and Olivier had been telling. The bringing in of the Yule log, which was to take place the next day, the building of the *Craiche,* on the three days preceding Christmas, the Christmas eve supper and ceremonies — the singing of carols, *Noëls;* it was all wonderful and thrilling.

Breakfast was brought to their rooms the next morning.

Almost before they were through, there came a knocking on the door, and the two rosy-faced, dark-haired French boys bade them make haste. "We are about to start," they cried.

The twins almost tipped over the table in their haste.

"Bridget, Bridget — do hurry. Where are those hats — we don't need gloves."

Bridget buttoned their coats and insisted on washing the honey from their faces, much to their disgust.

Alice was ready and Mr. and Mrs. Carter joined them. Mademoiselle decided that the long walk up the hill was not for her and stayed at home to unpack, somewhat disgusted at Bridget, who with her apron thrown over her head and a coat hastily pulled on, insisted on going with the children. Outside in the court the General and Madame Noir were waiting, with Madame René and all the servants of the chateau and all the farm hands. It was indeed a march of ceremony.

Two by two they ascended the hill until they came to the gnarled old olive tree that was to be cut down for the Yule log.

"It is a very ancient custom," Madame now explained to Mr. Carter. "In the poorer families they content themselves with branches but every Provençal household must have its Yule log. It is lighted on Christmas Eve and fortunate are those in whose home it burns until New Year's day."

The General, according to ancient usage, struck the first blow with an ax which the superintendent of the farm carried.

"If Jean or René were here, one of them would complete the good work," said Madame Noir. "As it is, Alexandre will do so for the General."

So the sturdy superintendent took the ax and his blows rang through the still air. Then with a crash the tree fell, an enormous log was cut from it and the General with three of the men to help bore it triumphantly, almost reverently down the hill to the chateau where it was carefully placed in the court-yard.

"You must be sure not to sit on it," warned Eduard gravely. "If you do, you will be ill and not be able to eat the Christmas dinner."

Bob and Kate, who had had no desire to sit on it, were now seized with a longing to do so. They whispered together. "Or you may be covered with boils," said Olivier.

Mr. and Mrs. Carter laughed but Madame Noir said,

"Really, children, I would not advise it."

"Do you believe that?" asked Mr. Carter wonderingly.

"I don't know," answered Madame Noir. "Of course it is not true, but do not, I beg of you, try it."

The next few days were spent most happily. The four younger children were always into some mischief or other, but as they spent most of the time at the farm, they did little harm except to the nerves

of the geese and pigs and hens. From day to day the short excursion to Nîmes and Pont au Gard was put off.

The General and Madame Noir were so delightful in their hospitality! But as Christmas day drew near Madame and her daughter were less and less in evidence. They were busy in the kitchen, making the Christmas sweets; nougats, doughnuts, cakes, candies and other goodies.

Three days before Christmas Olivier and Eduard invited their two young guests to help them make the *Craiche*. Some of the farm children assisted, too. They all went out together and brought sticks and stones, moss, and branches and in one corner of the great hall the building began. It was nothing less than to make a stable, a cradle, and, as well as they could, represent the whole scene of the holy family at Bethlehem — the Virgin and Joseph, the little Lord Christ whose birthday the whole world celebrates, the shepherds, and the animals who were in the stable. The toy figures and animals had been bought at a special fair which is held annually for that purpose in the towns of Provence. Bob and Katherine were delighted. They were not as skillful as the two French children, who had had several years of practice. Nevertheless everyone declared that never before had the *Craiche* been so beautiful.

While the younger children thus busied themselves, the General and Mr. and Mrs. Carter and Alice drove to Nîmes.

"It is a very old city, Alice," said the General — "older than anything you will see until you go to Italy and view the Roman Forum and the ruins and temples of the old Roman Empire." They were standing in front of the great amphitheater.

"It looks like the picture at home," said Alice.

"The picture is of the colosseum at Rome, I think,— but this is like it, only in even better preservation. They had bull fights and all sorts of bloodthirsty shows here in the old Roman days."

"But this is France, Daddy. Why were the old Romans here?"

"The Romans were in France, too, Alice — especially in Southern France. Haven't you read Cæsar? Don't you know that this is Gaul, which in my young days used to be 'quartered in three halves'?"

"Mercy — is this Gaul? 'Scuse me, Mother, I didn't mean to say mercy — but it's so queer. Everything has a different name."

The white streets of the little town seemed half asleep. There were a few women about, in their charming Provençal caps, ornamented with bows — but hardly any men.

"On Sundays and feast days it is different — so gay, so crowded," said Madame Noir. "On week days my countrymen must either sleep or work elsewhere."

"Perhaps they are looking for Yule logs," suggested Mr. Carter.

"Those are all in the houses by now."

"Where are the poorer quarters?" asked Mrs. Carter. "These houses all look so well kept and well to do."

"I believe there are very few poor in Provence," answered the General. "The land is good to us and our people are thrifty."

Then they left the town behind them and drove out into the country, with its almond and olive trees, its farms and gardens, to the wonderful Roman bridge. There in the midst of loneliness it stood, spanning a ravine and the river at the bottom; three arches, and on top the acqueduct which formerly brought water to the town. Not a stone seemed to have been injured by the centuries in which it had stood.

"What a remarkable people, Monsieur," said the General, as he and Mr. Carter stood looking up at the towering structure.

"Think of the labor of putting those great blocks together here in the wilderness with no modern engineering tools to help them," said Mr. Carter.

"They were great while they were simple," said the General gravely. "One must stay simple, like a child, is it not so, Monsieur, in order to conquer time, in order to live forever?"

They drove back through the twilight, the rocks shining white on the slopes beside the straight white road over which they traveled.

Christmas Eve came at last. Bob and Kate were anxiously asking where the stockings were to be hung — where the Christmas tree was to stand.

"You will have to wait until we get back to Texas next year for that, Bob," answered Mrs. Carter. "In France the Christ child brings the gifts, and the *Craiche* takes the place of our Christmas tree."

This was somewhat of a disappointment, but the children as well as everyone else enjoyed the wonderful, etherialized doughnuts which appeared with breakfast.

"They are a specialty of my daughter's," Madame had announced proudly. "Every Provençal family bakes doughnuts on Christmas Eve."

And with the doughnuts came loud cries of joy, the barking of dogs and the sound of carriage wheels, all to announce the arrival of Monsieur René and Monsieur Jean, and Jack. Then indeed did the old chateau ring with laughter — for the two young men were all joy to be at home once more in their beloved Provence, and the Carters were jubilant to be united again.

"Christmas here seems a mixture of Christmas and our New England Thanksgiving," said Mrs. Carter. She hated to have Jack out of her sight even for a moment. But she had to share him with Madame Noir. In fact all the Noir family persisted in treating him as a hero, much to his secret pride. It did trouble him though to be embraced frequently by Madame. And he much preferred running after Monsieur Jean, when that gentleman explored his old haunts about the farm, to talking with the General and Madame.

CHAPTER XXII

CHRISTMAS IN PROVENCE — A LETTER FROM THE BARONESS — AU REVOIR

The event of Christmas Eve was the great supper at six o'clock, when the Yule log was lighted. The table was spread with all sorts of delicacies — the huge Christmas loaf of bread signed with a cross and decorated with a sprig of holly — fish and cakes and all sorts of good things, but no meat,— for the Provenceaux are good Catholics and the day before a feast day is a fast day.

Everyone was present, all the servants and workmen on the estate — their wives and children. The ceremonies began with the lighting of the candles at the *Craiche,* and such a scramble as it was! For the children had a rivalry as to who would light the first one. Everyone was laughing and happy. Then four of the men went out and brought in the Yule log. This was done with much solemnity and the Yule log song was sung. Finally the youngest present, little François, son of the superintendent, asked the blessing in his Provençal patois and everyone sat down. The children were together and Monsieur Jean sat next to Jack.

A tall candle burnt at each end of the long table, which was set up in the great hall, and Monsieur Jean informed Jack gravely that if one of those

burnt out before the end of dinner and the wick fell toward any person present, that person would die within the year.

"What are those two plates with grass in them, Mother?" whispered Alice. For beside the candles were two plates in which was water and growing grain.

"That is St. Barbara's grain," said Eduard, who had heard the question. "It is planted on St. Barbara's day and tells us whether we are to have a fine harvest next year."

"What fun," said Kate. "It's like those funny heads with grass growing on them we saw in New York."

The bounteous feast was soon under way. Bob and Kate, who were overjoyed at staying up so late, ate till they could eat no more. But before the end, when coffee and wine and nuts appeared, they became very sleepy and departed in company of Bridget.

Olivier and Eduard, however, seemed to be as fresh as ever and enjoyed everything to the utmost.

After dinner all sat about the fire and the talk turned to family history.

"It is our day for ancestor worship," whispered Madame Noir to Mr. Carter.

Many were the stories of heroism they told. Soldier and civilian, they had been a chain of splendid men and women.

Mr. Carter, too, was asked to contribute and told a story which the children knew by heart. How

one of his uncles had gone from Texas into Mexico to fight at the side of the ill-fated Maximilian, the French prince who claimed Mexico and was so treacherously slain.

General Noir, who had often met Maximilian's unfortunate widow in Paris, was almost moved to tears.

It was another link to bind the families together. Madame Noir had placed Jack beside her after supper, much to his embarrassment. She wanted to make a hero out of her son's rescuer. She felt that he above all others was the honored guest.

After the stories all joined together in the singing of *Noëls* or Christmas carols and quaint and curious were some of them. One was a dialogue between Joseph and the keeper of the inn at Bethlehem which began with a prolonged " Hou " and was sung by Monsieur Jean and his sister. Then came a dialogue between an angel and a shepherd — and many others, some gay, some beautiful. Then Mr. and Mrs. Carter and Jack and Alice sang for their French friends some of the English carols: " On the wintry and lonely hillside," and, " It came upon the midnight clear." Last of all, everyone joined in singing the old, old hymn, " Adesti Fideles: "

" O come all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem."

Some sang in Latin and some in English but not a voice was silent. It was the signal for the breaking

up of the family gathering. Jack and Alice and the two little French boys, half asleep, tumbled off to bed, but not before they had looked out of the eastern window.

"To see the star of the Christ child," Eduard explained. And indeed one star in the east was brighter than the others. It seemed to say to them, "Come and see where the Lord is lying." All the rest of the family, including Mr. and Mrs. Carter, went out into the cold moonlight to the near-by church to attend the midnight mass that should usher in the Christmas feast day.

The Carter children had told their new friends all about the American way of keeping Christmas, so as a sort of compromise, the presents were all distributed by an imitation Santa Claus, who appeared a short time after Monsieur Jean retired to visit his dogs after the Christmas dinner. Altogether the day was a great success and passed without the homesickness which Mrs. Carter had dreaded for the children. Their hosts, and particularly Eduard and Olivier wanted them to stay on until Epiphany, the Feast of the Three Kings, for on that day all good Provençal children go forth to meet the three kings.

"Perhaps," Eduard said, "it would be given to you to see them." Bob and Kate stared at him. They could imagine a Santa Claus, but this was too much.

"Have you seen 'em?" gasped Bob.

"No, we hope to some day," said Olivier gravely.

On the last day of their stay at the chateau a let-

ter was forwarded to them from Madame de Rivière. It was addressed to Alice and contained the joyful news that they had found "Uncle Henri."

"You can imagine our joy at this Christmas season to have our lost restored to us," she wrote. "And picture to yourself his joy, alone and far from home. He will return to us when he can close his affairs in America, for he has 'made good,' as you say there. He is the part owner of a sheep farm. But he still loves his old home the best, he says. Ah, it will be a joy to see him."

"Well, I certainly never expected it," said Mr. Carter. "It seems like a miracle."

"A Christmas miracle," said Mrs. Carter. "I can imagine their joy."

"It is to you we owe it all, dear little one," wrote Madame de Rivière. "Some day you must come and visit us all again, a united family on this Fête de Noêl."

"Our youngsters seem to have been pretty good fairies," said Mr. Carter to his wife, while Jack and Alice went off to say some last important words to Eduard and Olivier.

They were to start for Nice on their way to Italy at the same time that Monsieur Jean and Monsieur René left for the north.

Many were the friendly farewells and genuine was the sorrow expressed at parting.

"You will come to us again Jack," said Madame Noir kissing him. "You are one of us — indeed we feel that we are all one family."

"Come across in your Antoinette and visit us in Texas. Remember you promised," laughed Mr. Carter, trying to bring a smile to the serious faces about him.

"I am coming, Monsieur," answered Monsieur Jean. "Things more wonderful will occur. You will see."

Then he turned to Jack and taking his hands with both of his own,

"We will meet again, *petit frère,*" he said. "You have to show me the snowy plains of your land. And we have not yet gone through the sky, with its stars, together. *Au revoir, mon cher.*"

And *au revoir* was the hopeful word which all exchanged.

Then the carriages drove away down the gentle slope to the station below.

"Only a week or so more in France and then on to Italy," said Mr. Carter.

THE END

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